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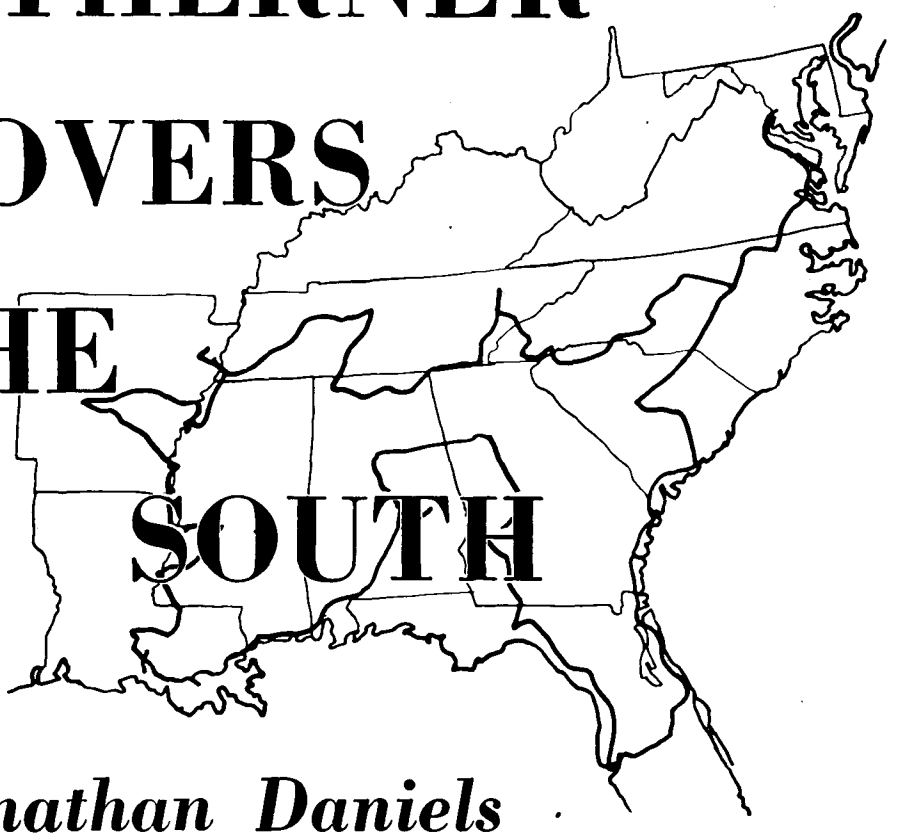
A SOUTHERNER DISCOVERS THE SOUTH



By

Jonathan Daniels

Editor of *The Raleigh* (N. C.)
News and Observer

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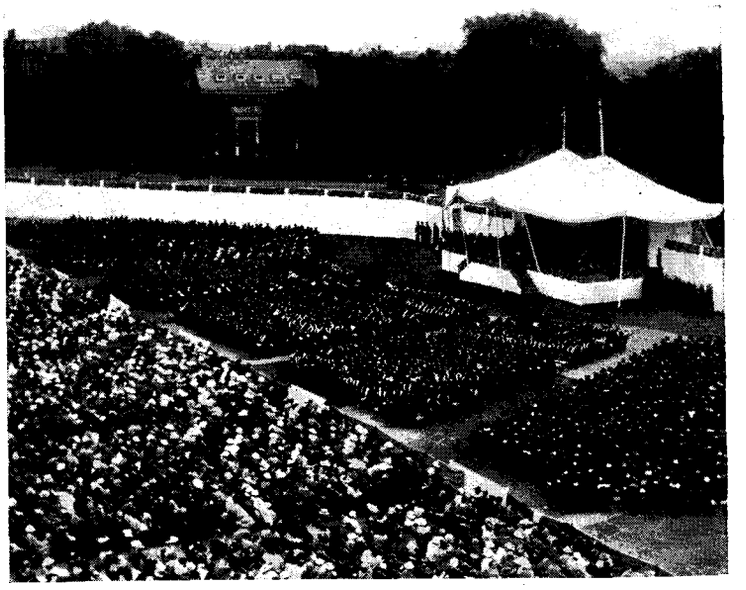
Can College Graduates Read?

BY EDWIN R. EMBREE



"We gave expression to that faith by building schools and colleges beyond those of any country in human history . . ." (Commencement exercises, New York University.)

"THE Student and His Knowledge," a publication recently issued by the Carnegie Foundation, is the most devastating report yet to appear on higher education in America. While this survey was centered on the schools and colleges of Pennsylvania, it may be regarded as giving a fair picture of education throughout the nation. The careful and intensive studies, made over a ten-year period, included tests in the many phases of education and were designed to discover not only the amount of useful information acquired by students during the college years but their progress in intelligence and understanding.

The results of the study may well undermine the mystical faith which we in America have had in formal education. We gave expression to that faith by building schools and colleges beyond those of any country in human history and by sending our children not only to school but also to college and university in numbers beyond the dreams—or nightmares—of any other nation. Almost all eligible children are enrolled in elementary schools. And in addition nearly seven million young people are in high schools. This is a high school enrollment of more than two-thirds of all the young people of high school age and is four or five times the percentage of secondary school attendance ever achieved by such enlightened countries as England, France, or Germany. In fact, more children are in high schools in America than in all the rest of the world put together. Another million and a quarter American students are enrolled in those pleasant custodial halls hopefully referred to as institutions of higher learning. We had fondly dreamed that our children would come out of this great educational mill filled not only with information but with insight and understanding.

The study of Pennsylvania schools and colleges indicates that by and large students are not even getting much information, let alone wisdom. The tests proved, among other things, that there is little relation between the time spent at college and the intelligence or achievement records of students. Though on the average college seniors made higher scores than sophomores, twenty-eight per cent of the seniors did not do as well as second year students and ten per cent had lower scores than the average high school senior. It is distressing to learn of the high percentage of brilliant high school graduates who do not go to college as compared with the average who do, for in the tests more than half of the high school students who were to continue their formal education had lower scores in the intelligence and English tests than twenty-five per cent who were not planning to go to college. Even more distressing is the revelation that those college graduates who plan to become teachers are not only less well equipped for these important posts than most of their classmates, but that seven per cent of them made lower scores than thirty-six per cent of the high school pupils.

But the most appalling item in this Carnegie report is a study of students at a single college. Of some fifty brilliant freshmen followed throughout their course, more than two-thirds knew less at the end of junior year than they did during their first year. They had less accurate information and their insights and understanding had been blunted. Scholasticism, routine, and mediocrity had done their perfect work. Commenting on the progressive degradation of these brilliant entering students, the report says:

> The fact that minds of this caliber had been obliged through two years to adjust their stride and intellectual sympathies to colleagues, and probably even to some instructors, who were inferior to themselves cannot have been without its sinister effect. These students obviously had no intellectual purpose or stimulus appropriate to their ability. Although as freshmen they were already beyond that intellectual level at which the college could serve them effectively, they were obliged to use their wits elsewhere and mark time academically for three more years until the calendar should release them.

This whole report is so damning that it compels educators not only to gasp but to try to do something to correct the present evils. Many ideas will be presented and it will be well to give free play to all reasonable suggestions. No single formula is apt to solve the manifold problems of education. In fact, one of the present evils is that we have supposed that fixed rules and standards and courses could accomplish the very delicate business of education.

My own belief is that a major aspect of sound education is reading. If children learn to read fluently and understandingly, they have acquired the finest of the intellectual tools. If these young people will then proceed to read, they will take care of the greater part of their own education.

Learning to read is an astonishingly delicate and complicated business. It does not consist simply of learning to spell words or to pronounce syllables. It consists chiefly in learning to grasp the quaint symbols of the alphabet in such a way

Next Week

A DAY OF BATTLE
By VINCENT SHEEAN
Reviewed by Stephen Vincent Benét

WHAT A UNIVERSITY PRESIDENT HAS LEARNED
By A. LAWRENCE LOWELL
Reviewed by Robert M. Hutchins

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that meaning is conveyed by means of the printed page from the author to the reader. Mechanical skill in reading is a first and essential step, but reading actually takes place only after the initial mechanics is mastered and after the individual begins to get pleasure and understanding from the printed page.

Even in the teaching of the mechanics of reading there must be a close connection between what the child already knows and what is conveyed to him through written words. This is another way of saying that education must have a very close relation to the life of the pupil. Much of the failure both in school and college comes from the fact that we so quickly allow learning to run into scholasticism. Neither the ability to read nor any other kind of learning is an end in itself. Values come only as education tends to enrich the lives of the students and the society of which they are a part. All this seems self-evident, yet waves of argument in behalf of scholastic studies constantly sweep over the country. Schools and colleges are urged from time to time to ignore all current life and to return, for example, to the fragmentary learning of Greece or to the scholastic exercises of the Middle Ages—to "courses," and "credits," and "lessons."

Even the elementary schools easily fall into scholasticism, that is, into rote learning. In work with little rural schools in Southern states I have run on to astonishing examples of this rote learning. In a little school just outside Baton Rouge, Louisiana, the teacher had been hearing a class read a lesson on birds in one of the standard textbooks. To drive home a point from the lesson, she asked a boy, "When do the robins come?"

The pupil answered promptly, "In the fall."

"Now, Jimmie," urged the teacher, "read the lesson carefully again."

After he had droned out the text a second time, she said cheerily, "Now, Jimmie, when do the robins come?"

More hesitantly and sullenly he answered again, "The robins come in the fall."

"James, James," shouted the teacher. "Read that lesson again. Now tell me when do the robins come?"

Almost in tears the boy finally answered, "The robins come in the spring."

And so they do—in Boston where the text was written. But in Louisiana, just in order to avoid the northern winter, they come in the fall, as the boy well knew. Here we had an all too frequent combination of a stupid teacher, who was intent on grinding out a "lesson," and a textbook unadapted to the region. The result must have been either to destroy the boy's confidence in his own common sense, or, more likely, to break down completely his respect for book learning.

In its very earliest stages reading must have something to do with the lives of the children. As the school process continues, the child will become educated in direct ratio not to the amount of rote learning which is crammed into him but to the opportunities offered to him for general reading.

The wider the child's reading the better. There is no need to censor or direct his literary pursuits. The thing is to let him read whatever he finds interesting. He will quickly set his own standards if only he begins to get enjoyment and satisfaction from books. I have seen many cases where children were reading avidly what appeared to their parents to be trash, yet in a few years, making their own selections, these children were reading not only much more than their parents but books which, by anyone's standard, were far above the average of their parents' reading.

The present tendency to provide all schools with at least small collections of supplementary texts and stories is probably the most effective movement in modern education. And the trend toward letting the student educate himself by ample reading and study in well-stocked libraries is a similarly wise movement in higher education. Lessons and lectures do not give a student anything that would compare in value, in understanding, even in information, with the knowledge he can obtain by consulting for himself and on his own initiative the works of the masters. I believe that if children were taught to read properly and if secondary schools and colleges, instead of teaching "courses," encouraged and developed a love of reading, a situation such as that reported in Pennsylvania could not exist.

What I have been saying about reading in the early years applies with even greater force to college education. The difference between good and bad teaching is largely the degree to which the teacher eliminates himself, and inspires the student to do his own study and thus to accomplish his own education. This has been recognized in the laboratory more than in the library. Students of chemistry or biology are expected as a matter of course to work out their own problems, observing growth and reaction from the plants and animals and chemicals they use in their own experiments. Only in this way is the study of science anything more than the rote learning of fixed formulae which in themselves may be as poor intellectual equipment as superstitions and old wives' tales. Good teachers—there are still too few—are seeing similarly that in the subjects other than science the student gains nothing by being stuffed with facts. In this highly complex world there are few fixed and dogmatic answers to any questions. Education, even during the college years themselves, is sterile if it simply pumps information into the none-too-receptive brain of the student. And if college is to be thought of as preparation for life, then the student must be lured into finding things out for himself, using the teacher simply as guide and counselor.

My college days go back to that distant era when William Graham Sumner was teaching at Yale and I had the great good fortune to study with him. His lectures were interesting and inspiring. But the best thing he did for me—and for hundreds of Yale men—was to open up to us the vistas of diverse social systems all over the world. He lured us into balancing the quaint habits of Samoan chiefs and dancing girls against the equally quaint habits of New Haven bankers and debutantes. He sent us scurrying to the libraries to read about the Fijians, the Papuans, and the Hottentots, about British peers, French raconteurs, and German savants. He inspired many of us to get to remote spots of the globe as soon

(*Continued on page* 16)

Discretion in Midsummer

BY CHRISTOPHER MORLEY

NIGHT left us early, but her sport was shown:
A cobweb handkerchief was on the grass,
Her raindrop crystals on the sassafras,
And after-dinner nutshells on a stone.
Her lipstick stained the rhododendron cone,
Torn gown, her color, blue as poison-glass,
Was in the larkspur. All the birds, en masse,
Were gossiping that if the truth were known . . .

We smoothed the tumbled beds and made all neat,
Squirrels and I. Cleared each betraying sign
(No gardener will mention all he knows).
Put on your tails, I said, and be discreet:
For we were due on the receiving line
To greet a well-bred debutante, the rose.

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Progress below the Potomac

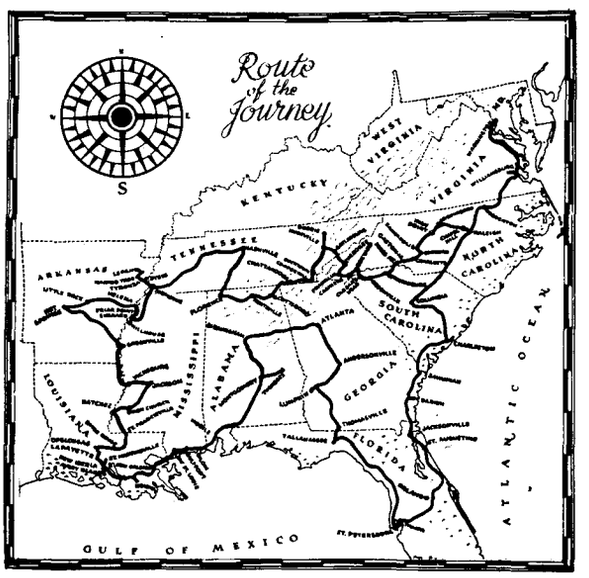
A SOUTHERNER DISCOVERS THE SOUTH. By Jonathan Daniels. New York: The Macmillan Co. 1938. $3.

Reviewed by LAMBERT DAVIS

THE South has been discovered many times by outsiders since 1585, and most of the discoveries have aroused strong emotions. The Abolitionists who took the trouble to come South in the 1830s and 1840s were horrified. The Washington matrons who drove out to Manassas in their carriages to see the rebels routed were dumfounded. The railroad and textile financiers who followed Reconstruction may not always have come down to see the land itself, but they did discover and exploit a set of conditions that have made the South the colonial empire of the North and East. After them, it was easy for the Northern readers of Cable and Page, serene in the conviction that the defeated South accepted its proper chastisement, to believe the legend of the magnolia and the julep. In fact, social historians of the future will probably agree that the legend derives as much from Northern sentimentality as from Southern nostalgia. Since that day, other outsiders have made other discoveries, down through Secretary Perkins's famous faux pas about shoeless children to almost the latest speech of the President.

Southerners, meanwhile, made surprisingly few discoveries, chiefly because they assumed that they already knew the South. Virginians who had never seen a cotton boll were quite ready to explain the need for the existing plantation system in the Mississippi delta country, and Arkansawyers who had never crossed the Mississippi could defend the accent and manners of Charleston. The magnolia legend was a godsend for a defeated region, because it saved thought, salved wounds, and at the same time provided a minimum program for a united front against the outside world. That united front, like all other united fronts, was a defensive and not an offensive strategy; it could survive only as long as dangers from outside were stronger than cleavages from within. Since the turn of the century, and especially since the World War, the internal stresses of the South have become increasingly important and apparent; the united front has suffered strains that only a Léon Blum could adequately understand. Southern industrialists, agrarians, sharecroppers, union organizers, North Carolina sociologists, and assorted mavericks have raised their cries, and it is apparent to any intelligent Southerner that he can no longer trust his nose and the old family library for a proper knowledge of the South. The time for the discovery of the South by Southerners has arrived.

Jonathan Daniels's "A Southerner Discovers the South" is not the first Southern attempt at discovery, but it is the best attempt for those who would follow the voyage without too many preconceived ideas of their own. Mr. Daniels assumes the modest role of a reporter on a tour, and makes his swing through the South interviewing the right people, confabbing over Coca-Colas in country stores, and arguing with the intellectuals. He puts the crucial questions and lets the characters speak for themselves, but his eye is for the nuance in manner, and his ear for the tone of anger or suspicion or kindness, that might give meaning to an apparently flat statement. And in his reflective passages he is less anxious to voice his own opinions than he is to illuminate his characters and to give his scenes the right perspective.



"Mr. Daniels . . . makes his swing through the South interviewing the right people, confabbing over Coca-Colas in country stores, and arguing with the intellectuals. . . ."

He begins his tour in the graveyard that was once General Lee's plantation, and he ends it at a tomb in Charleston, but in between there are some livelier encounters. In one chapter on the textile district in the Carolinas he says more about the alleged contented Anglo-Saxon labor of the South than could be found in many large volumes. In the Tennessee Valley he looks beyond the magnificent blueprints and shows the essential conflict, reflected partially in the personalities of the three directors of T.V.A., between modernization by fiat and modernization by persuasion. In the Mississippi valley he compares and contrasts three attempts to deal with the cotton problem: the government-sponsored Dyess colony of small proprietors, Sherwood Eddy's Christian socialist coöperative experiment at Hillhouse, and the giant capitalist venture of the Delta and Pine Land Company. In Alabama he matches an interview with one of Birmingham's leading industrialists with a talk with the college-trained Negro who is organizing the tenant farmers.

The interview, the conversation, and the anecdote are Mr. Daniels's chief devices for revealing his discoveries; and these devices, even when they are as wittily employed as he employs them, may disconcert the reader who is hot for certainties. Mr. Daniels—like most Southerners, I believe—distrusts final solutions. Anyone who has faced candidly the South's most overshadowing problem, the Negro, knows that there are only two final solutions, disappearance or amalgamation, neither of which is entertained as an immediate practical possibility by any large group. On the other hand, there are literally hundreds of feasible accommodations and compromises, which offer the choice between reasonable stability and certain chaos. On this question and on all the others that confront the South Mr. Daniels works, like Bismarck, within the limits of the possible. In this he displays a wisdom that I like to think is characteristically Southern, a kind of cheerful skepticism of the possibility of making the world over in the next five days. Certainly this wisdom is not uniquely Southern; it is perhaps the heritage of any agricultural past, since the farmer knows that, however well he plans, in the last result God and the weather count the most. At its worst, this wisdom becomes a defeatism that will put up with anything—and defeatism is all too common in the South. At its best—and it is at its best in Mr. Daniels—it is a saving grace which tempers the pride that any man is apt to fall into. And it enables Mr. Daniels to write a book that is far richer and more humane than any dogmatic approach would have allowed.

Finalities Mr. Daniels will not give, but he does point out directions. He is correct in saying that the true revolutionaries of the modern South are the advertising men. Coca-Cola and Cardui are the only luxuries that the whole of the South can now afford, but the advertising pages of magazines that are used, with permanent visibility, as wallpaper, in Southern shacks are giving Southerners more exalted notions of luxury. The colonial South cannot be isolated from the North as Britain's African empire is from England. And it is the itch for the good things of the North that is behind such diverse phenonema as the C.I.O. drive in textiles, the rise of Huey Long,

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and the cultivation of tourism in Natchez, Mississippi. Whether any of the qualities that we associate with an older South will survive the turmoil that this itch is begetting is any man's guess.

This review would have meant very little if I should end by saying that "A Southerner Discovers the South" is a complete picture of the South. For a rounded understanding it needs to be supplemented by such works as Odum's huge statistical survey, "Southern Regions," by Margaret Bourke-White's photographs, by the publications of the more argumentative groups within the South, and by a few good novels. But by the same logic it is a necessary supplement to such reading. For it provides the actual portraits of living people, the telling anecdotes, and the wise reflection on Southern destiny that will make these other materials come to life. And more than any other book I know it gives a sense of the sprawling diversity and violent contrasts that characterize the contemporary Southern scene.

Lambert Davis, for several years editor of the Virginia Quarterly Review, *is now associated with the Bobbs-Merrill Co.*

Mute, Inglorious Smallshaw

PAVED WITH GOOD INTENTIONS. By Dorothy McCleary. New York: Doubleday, Doran & Co. 1938. $2.

Reviewed by JAMES GRAY

MISS McCLEARY'S new novel celebrates the pathetic tragedy of the man who never got around to writing his book. Her variation on the theme is original and deeply disquieting. It possesses none of the heroic quality of George Cram Cook's spiritual misadventure, described so affectingly by Susan Glaspell in "The Road to the Temple." (Jig Cook let his wisdom explode in talk, but he was never a dismal figure to his disciples in the Golden Age of Greenwich Village.) Even in Clyde Brion Davis's "The Great American Novel," Homer Zigler's pathos is softened by the author's tenderly protective attitude.

Miss McCleary exposes her character, Webster Smallshaw, as the archetype of mute ingloriousness. As a creature of intellect he suffers from nothing nobler than psychic pregnancy. The genius that he feels within himself is merely the product of a fatuous, hysterical imagination.

Dorothy McCleary

Absurd tag ends of scholarship, fragments out of anthologies of quotations are all the learning Smallshaw really possesses. Yet he unfalteringly believes that he is about to bring forth a work of comprehensive wisdom. The belief is sufficient to justify him in neglecting his duties as a patent attorney; in wooing his wife with extravagant, sentimental gestures while he placidly ignores his fundamental obligations; in becoming a drunkard; and in settling down to dependence upon a spinster sister.

Miss McCleary is evidently a student of American genius. In Smallshaw's relations with women, the tremulous sensibility which alternates with a hard and calculating selfishness reminds one of Poe. In the friendship with Bill Schneider, Smallshaw reveals something of the paradoxical mixture of masculine and feminine traits that characterized Whitman's psychology. Indeed, this man has most of the disturbing by-products of greatness, lacking only the greatness itself.

This material is observed with scrupulous objectivity. The author permits herself no moral judgment. There is no case to be made against Smallshaw except that he is the victim of a bemused and blinded complacency. The other figures belong to the tiny circle of an obscure man. They are a believable and touching group.

"Paved with Good Intentions" is a curious achievement. Webster Smallshaw is a less familiar type than Homer Zigler of Mr. Davis's novel. But Miss McCleary's dismal figure of fun is quite as cunningly observed. His traits are more interestingly individualized and much more deeply probed. Within the limits set by the tone of sober, rather intense irony, it is difficult to see how a better study of futility could have been achieved.

Fairy Tale in a Village Kitchen

OLD HOME WEEK. By Minnie Hite Moody. New York: Julian Messner. 1938. $2.50.

Reviewed by FRANCES WOODWARD

A SUMMER storm sweeping across the Illinois prairie has much the same effect in a small village as the carnival of Old Home Week had in the lives of the village inhabitants so pleasantly portrayed by Minnie Hite Moody. Such a storm hangs on the far horizon for a while, filling the air with a breathless sense of suspended waiting. Then it moves forward, lowers, strikes in a wind which twists the clothes on the lines; the noon light turns greenish, an undersea unreality in which familiar things take new perspective and are strangely clear. Then the roar of the rain. Then the sun again, and new fragrance rising from meadows freshened to sweet accustomedness.

"Banners are out on Main Street" . . . (From the jacket of "Old Home Week.")

This is not far-fetched simile, but an almost exact description of the plot of "Old Home Week." The story opens as Annie Benton hangs her Monday's wash on the line, hurrying a little, to be ready for Prairieville's great get-together. The airplane is in the meadow, ready for passengers at so much a pound, the trapeze artists have stretched their wire, banners are out on Main Street, basket lunches are being prepared, and the trains disgorge unlikely home-coming native sons and daughters. It is with the Benton family that the reader spends the next few days, watching while Hiram and Annie, their children and their grandma, are swept in to a delirium of change and excitement, to be reclaimed in the end by reality and Prairieville.

Miss Moody's detail, her small and homely insights, are warm and true. So perhaps it is captious to quarrel with the amount of neat fortuitousness which rounds out each character's separate adventure. All the inhabitants of Prairieville are recognizable except Grandma. Grandma, regrettably, is that same salty, capricious, wicked-tongued centurion of whom we have had dozens too many.

But Grandma doesn't spoil the story. This novel is not written to be torn apart by critical inspection. It is an agreeable, sweet-smelling, folksy whole; a fairy tale set in village kitchens.

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Martyr in Full Dress

OSCAR WILDE: THE MAN, THE ARTIST, THE MARTYR. By Boris Brasol. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons. 1938. $3.50.

Reviewed by CLYDE KENNETH HYDER

THE appearance of new books on Wilde is as inevitable as the man's tragedy: a tragedy shaped by parentage, training, education; by sheer accident and pathological taint; by individual folly and popular bigotry; by the *hubris* of a hero who seemed to conceal a satyr's leer behind a jester's mask. The story leads from giddy heights to sordid depths—the depths from which emerged "De Profundis." The ideal biographer of Wilde should have a sense of drama, including an eye for comic relief—the Wilde anecdotage has assumed almost Johnsonian proportions—and an intimate knowledge of the nineteenth-century setting. He should also be something of an artist.

To say that Mr. Brasol falls short of the ideal is not to condemn his book, in some ways better-balanced and more objective than other accounts. It is more pointed than even Renier's in analysis of Wilde's aberrations, and it paints a fuller portrait. It avoids the Munchausenisms of Frank Harris. Since Sherard's early work, new materials have appeared — for example, Sherard's own criticism of Harris, and O'Sullivan's essays. Mr. Brasol uses such sources and certain unpublished letters, which reveal, for one thing, Oscar's unexpected interest in lawn tennis and fishing. His discussion of Wilde's parents and of Constance Wilde is noteworthy; and being a lawyer himself, he portrays the Wilde trials judiciously. The pages on the esthete in America might have been improved by further use of Lewis and Smith's "Oscar Wilde Discovers America." Mr. Brasol errs in saying that Wilde was cheated out of a substantial sum by New York sharpers, for the victim stopped payment on the checks he had given to them; and the occurrence happened in December, instead of November, the date given in the chronological summary. But on the whole, the facts in the book have been checked more carefully than the quotations.

Courtesy of Robert H. Sherard

Oscar Wilde in 1875

Though the author's criticism is sometimes stimulating, he is often more eclectic than precise in his choice of critical comparisons. Following Ingleby, he likens "The Sphinx" to Poe's "Raven," though he neglects the closer affinities with a passage in De Quincey's "Confessions" (the entry under May, 1818), Pater's description of the Mona Lisa, and Swinburne's "Cleopatra" and "Dolores." Of special interest is Brasol's appreciative comments on "The Sphinx," "Intentions," and the fairy tales, as well as his comparison of "Salomé" with Maeterlinck's drama. In ranking "An Ideal Husband" above "The Importance of Being Earnest," does he not undervalue (as do many critics) Wilde's characteristic excellence —mastery of intellectual farce, of epigrammatic wit?

The author's phrasing is frequently lively and original. But many passages need revision. "A still happier tiding," "to mistake this . . . with," "mental worry" are hardly idiomatic English. "Approbated by ossified routine" is only one example of an unnecessary murkiness of expression. But though the book is faulty, it is not dull—a fact creditable not only to the author but also to his subject. Could any book on so elusive yet so captivating a personality be altogether dull? In both comic and tragic moments, Wilde was wont to don a mask, to play the inspirer of legend. He rejoiced that he had never walked down Piccadilly with a lily in his hand: "Any one could have done that. The great and different thing was what *I* achieved—to make the whole world believe I had done it." How his narcissistic nature would have relished biographers' efforts to separate what he did from what the world thought he did!

Mr. Brasol's efforts in this direction are honest and temperate. His title, by the way, calls Wilde a "martyr," as indeed he was, if one does not assign too sentimental a meaning to the word. Probably the martyr's crown would seem rather ungraceful to one who would prefer to dine in full dress, seated in some distant Elysium, laughing with that mellow laughter which was the most genuine thing about him, tossing off epigrams as airily as smoke rings, and flicking cigarette ashes on fields neither of lilies nor of daisies but of asphodel.

Buggy Ride for the War Correspondents

SCOOP. By Evelyn Waugh. Boston: Little, Brown & Co. 1938. $2.50.

Reviewed by TERENCE HOLLIDAY

AMONG Mr. John Courteney Boot's more valued friends was the lovely Mrs. Algernon Stitch, wife of the Prime Minister; among his more pressing needs was a prolonged absence from London, where Romance had reared its ugly head directly in his smooth and prosperous path. Mrs. Stitch therefore engaged to wangle from Lord Copper, the great journalist-tycoon, a job for Boot as war correspondent in Ishmaelia, where the Reds and Blacks were at it hammer and tongs.

On the one hand, then, Mr. John Courteney Boot. On the other Mr. William Boot—no relation—of Boot Magna Hall, whose bi-weekly half-column, "Lush Places," was one of the less objectionable features of Lord Copper's journal of news and opinion, *The Daily Beast*. Mrs. Stitch's hint to Lord Copper, that Boot was his man for the Ishmaelian crisis, was interpreted as an imperative demand from the Cabinet. Since *John* Boot was a nonentity to the Noble Lord and all his staff, the terrified and bewildered *William* Boot, Countryman, fell heir to the arduous task and dubious honor of representing *The Beast* on the Ishmaelian front.

So much by way of prelude; the Odyssey proper of William Boot may be said to begin with his outfitting and departure from London; and at this crucial point, Mr. Waugh sets a narrative pace that is fast, furious, and hilarious. Our devoted and desperate William is caught in a coil of journalistic jealousy, political stratagem, and amorous intrigue; his earnest, conscientious efforts to report fairly and accurately on the course of events in Ishmaelia are misinterpreted and defeated at every turn; and his fabulous "scoop" is due to a concatenation of perverse accidents. There remains to be mentioned only the triumphant return to London; the threat of a knighthood; and the descent once more on the peace of Boot Magna Hall.

Mr. Waugh nourishes and promotes a hearty loathing of sensational journalism, and is abundantly provided with the means to make his loathing felt by the sympathetic reader. An earlier book, "Waugh in Abyssinia," testifies to the validity of its author's material for his present purpose. The portrait of Lord Copper is etched with a biting, sardonic acid; and if the satire is laid on not with a trowel but with a poleaxe, Mr. Waugh can still persuade us that the element of truth counterbalances his most fantastic extravagances. "Scoop" is a brilliant, accomplished novel, a merciless lampoon directed against an atrocious and vulgar parasite on our precarious society.

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The Saturday Review
of Literature

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Tough and Tender

THERE is a better opportunity than usual in this year of 1938 to note one of the periodic swings in American taste. No, taste is too weak a word; something deeper than taste controls these alterations of tough- and tender-mindedness, and these fundamentally different attitudes toward life.

A few years ago we were all for being naturalistic. The roughs, the criminally neurotic, the hardboiled, and the cynical had their say—and sometimes said it brilliantly. The Hemingways presented the completely uninhibited man, and were sentimental over unsentimentality. The Faulkners and the Caldwells created a land where everything stank, an unlovely land which poisoned the brains of its inhabitants. The joy was in yielding not conquering; the beauty was kin to corruption and death. It was the same South that Ellen Glasgow wrote of, but its essence had become sensational. Rape, drunkenness, and degeneracy were of its soul, as much as its body. There was truth to fact, sometimes excellently imagined, but still more truth to the imagination of the writers. The facile materialism of the times bred a loathing of success, and created a market for studies of failure. The smug language of respectability stirred a craving for the outspoken and the lurid. Style went to the underworld and came back with armfuls of words.

And now, almost while we read, the taste changes, the emotions shift, the leaders in novelty become standbys and outdated. The tender comes back;—not in form-fitting clothes and hobble skirts as in the last age of tenderness, but dressed in the same rather rough exteriors we have got to like. There is some significance in the emergence of John Steinbeck and Clyde Brion Davis as writers who are both promising and successful.

We would not be misunderstood. Neither of these men is a tradesman stocking a new line of goods for a changed market. Steinbeck has a history of growth behind him, but not of change. His early romantic novel of the life of the buccaneer Morgan, "The Cup of Gold," is too immature to reveal anything except a feeling for characters with a complicated inner life. But in "The Pastures of Heaven" and "To a God Unknown," both unsuccessful commercially, he is adding to his psychological mysticism an interesting affection for the land and for people conditioned by the land, which is just as far away from Faulkner's miasmic swamps and Caldwell's erotic sand, as his California is from the southern seaboard. "In Dubious Battle" is still the best American proletarian novel, because it is about the only proletarian novel that is a story rather than a Marxian document, and because of his feeling for his characters. But of course the best instance is "Of Mice and Men." Here is another social document, but of the school of Dickens not of the school of the propagandists. Steinbeck's characters in that long short story are men broken by the economic system by which they try to live. But it is their longings not their miseries which you remember. And it is the passionate morality of the man who is willing to be his brother's keeper, rather than the mental sickness of poor Lennie, that is the emphasis of the book. Readers who had lagged behind so far that they had not yet caught up with the cruel books of the past decade, were shocked by "Of Mice and Men." They found it too frank, too sexual, too concerned with the degraded. That has happened before, and is a tribute to Steinbeck, who has profited by the realism before him, and takes life as he sees it, then interprets it according to his belief as to what it means. And if it means something less cruel, less cynical, less tough beneath the rough exterior, to him than to the last literary leaders in America, why then we need draw no moral, except to say that the pendulum swings and truth is to be found all along its path.

The case of Mr. Davis is even more striking, because pity, a motive almost driven out by the hatred and fear in the novels of the early thirties, is his dominant. He hides it by an indirect approach, he keeps it from slopping over by a firm grasp on external reality. He feels its dangers so strongly that in his last book, "The Great American Novel," he has adopted a technique comparable to that of a wader of a rocky trout stream who balances his rod in the upper world of sunlight while his feet feel for the depths below. His hero writes the biography of a newspaperman, and an outline of contemporary history as he saw it in the headlines, while the implications of his pathetic story grow and grow until the reader begins to expand them for himself. A brave heart, devoid of either self-knowledge or self-pity, is the theme of that novel,—the rest is background. And who else in our time has made a fanatic bearable, as Davis did in "The Anointed"? There are fanatics in Faulkner, but they are diseased.

Does all this mean that "Douglas, Douglas, tender and true" is to be the theme song for the next era of fiction? Undoubtedly, no. The promise of these two men is their versatility, their humor, most of all a fresh eye on experience. "Tortilla Flat" has its humorous tenderness but is no harbinger of a sentimental school of fiction. The moral to be drawn, if any, is only that in spite of what is happening in Spain and China, and just possibly because of it, the imagination is engaged again on one of its many shifts. Pity is coming back, as pity will when cruelty seems to be ascendant; tenderness is coming back, as tenderness will when frightened people (and since 1914 there have been many frightened) get through with the pose of being callous and tough. Someone has recently said of "Snow White" that it indicates a weak world trying to find release in fantasy. Release and relief, yes—but as for weakness, one might as well say that it is weakness for a tired man to seek rest in sleep. There is always tomorrow.

More interesting than the moral, if any, however, is the emergence of two really able writers in the American scene who can touch the gentler (but not less deep) emotions without being mawkish or untruthful. They deserve their success, and their success is proof that they were needed.

H. S. C.

Justice Cardozo

NOT the least tribute to the powers and the personality of the late Justice Cardozo has been the recognition on the part of the people at large of the calibre of the man. He has appealed to the popular imagination as perhaps few among his associates on the Court have done, with the exception of Justice Holmes, and for somewhat the same reasons. For the masses have recognized in him too the scholar who wore his learning with grace, the jurist who, steeped in the law and apt in its citation, regarded it as part of the living fabric of the nation, the instrument of its needs, not an implement to force conformity to dead issues. It could not have been otherwise with Justice Cardozo, for he was too deeply read in history, too inured to philosophic thought, not to have been aware of the fast flowing tide of civilization and the flotsam of human institutions it carried in its wake. His was the culture that was bred in acquaintance "with the best that has been known and thought in the world." He delighted in music and literature, and had an exquisite taste in both. His briefs were classics of legal literature, and his felicity of style made such works as "The Nature of the Judicial Process" accessible to the lay public as well as the professional. Neither custom nor professional necessity could dull the profound humanity of the man. He had the rarest distinction of mind and spirit.

A. L.

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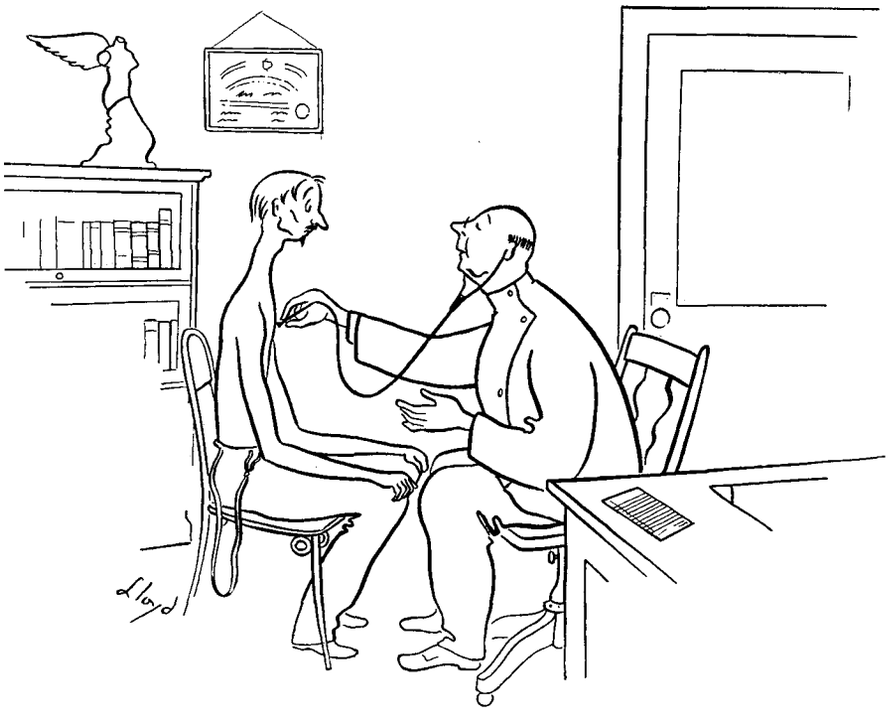
Letters to the Editor: *The Basic Materials of Modern Poetry*

Collecting Poetry Manuscripts

SIR:—At the Lockwood Memorial Library of the University of Buffalo we are developing a project which should interest every student and lover of poetry and which should, in time, provide the scholar with materials not only for a really proper investigation of the mechanical methods of poetic composition but also for a systematic study of the mental processes involved in actual creation. We are collecting the manuscripts of contemporary poets, genuine working manuscripts, not just copies in the poet's handwriting of finished poems that show no variation from the printed text. Our aim is to have for every significant modern poet, who writes in English, the complete work-sheets, in so far as they are available, which have gone to the making of a group of representative poems. We want every scrap of documentary evidence which belongs to the history of their composition: the rapid and incomplete notes that may in a phrase or an image contain the germ of the poem that is still to come; the first rough draft; the trial and intermediate versions, which show the poem growing step by step towards its finished form, and the author's mind at work moulding his material into shape; everything, in fact, straight through to the final copy that is sent off to the printer. With materials like these at his disposal, the literary scholar should be able to interpret the poets and poetry of our age with considerably more assurance than has hitherto been possible.

Such a project can be carried through only with the coöperation of the poets themselves. We have asked them to assist us by contributing complete *dossiers* on the making of a few of their best poems. Their response has been generous, even enthusiastic. Within a few months after our first appeals, we had packets of manuscript from over sixty poets and promises from some forty more; and most of what had come in was exactly to our purpose, not always so complete as we might wish, but as much as could be immediately provided. These results were entirely the fruit of correspondence. For still better results it was necessary to see the poets and explain to them personally and in detail exactly what it is that we are trying to do.

The Carnegie Corporation gave us an experimental grant that sent me off to the British Isles to see and talk with as many British poets as could be crowded into a three months' visit. They were not only coöperative; they were intelligently interested and remarkably open-handed. I saw over a hundred of all types and ages—the celebrated and the relatively unknown, the traditional and the revolutionary, the serious and the playful, the complex and the simple, the popular and the unpopular. Some were more sympathetic than others, to be sure, but no one was unwilling to help towards the furtherance of our project. From most of them I was able at once to get characteristic manuscripts, the beginnings of the *dossiers* we shall continue to expand; from the rest we have the promise that they will forward such materials when they have them.



"Your heartbeat is definitely dactylic. No wonder you can't write sonnets!"

The list of poets who are thus giving us their support is a formidable one, too long to quote in full, but it contains the names of W. H. Davies, John Masefield, Walter de la Mare, Alfred Noyes, Edith Sitwell, Humbert Wolfe, T. S. Eliot, Louis MacNeice, Stephen Spender, and Cecil Day Lewis. Mrs. Robert Bridges has given us some of the few surviving work-sheets of "The Testament of Beauty"; Mrs. John Freeman has turned over to us the early and intermediate drafts of her husband's later lyrics and the entire manuscripts of his longer poems; Dr. Oliver Gogarty, who has promised examples of his own verse, has supplied us with poems of A. E. and with a most interesting revision of the typescript of his own "Wild Apples" by W. B. Yeats, who was not in Dublin at the time of my visit.

We have still a long way to go. Our files are not yet so rich as to breed any complacency on our part. Though American poets have been already most responsive to letters, it is unlikely that they will be fully represented until we have been able to see them individually, as we have seen their British colleagues. And, when we have completed the primary labor of collecting, we hope to make available, by means of the new microfilm processes, the most important of our holdings to scholars situated everywhere throughout the English-speaking countries.

But already the collection is impressive. When it has been augmented by the fulfillment of promises, when those poets who have already contributed add still further to its stores, it will begin to be in actuality what it has been our dream to create: a working library of the basic materials of modern poetry, which will meet the most extravagant demands of growing generations of scholars and critics and which will assist towards the completer understanding of the processes of thought which lie behind and direct the creation of poetry.

C. D. ABBOTT.
Lockwood Memorial Library,
University of Buffalo.

"Youth Tell Their Story"

SIR: In my review of "Youth Tell Their Story," by Howard M. Bell of the American Youth Commission, I find what I hope was a typographical error but probably was an aberration on my part. According to the review, nearly eighty per cent of the Maryland youth interviewed by Mr. Bell's assistants regarded the youth problem as primarily economic in character (not necessarily a materialistic attitude, since jobs and money are means to other desiderata). The correct percentage is nearly sixty, not eighty. I'm afraid it was my mistake, and I'm sorry.

RAYMOND G. FULLER.
Newton, Conn.

Joseph's Coat

SIR:—After reading Thomas Mann's "Joseph" books, I am left with one question. Do you know where he got the idea that the "coat of many colors" was Rachel's marriage veil?

As Mr. Mann has followed the events recorded in the Bible cleverly and accurately, I am curious to find out if the very tragic and interesting story of the veil originated in his own mind or whether he has some reason to believe it is the truth.

JANE H. SAGENDORPH.
Peterborough, N. H.

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"Essentially Gardner is an experimenter. . . "

The Case of the Mystery Writer

A Profile of Erle Stanley Gardner

BY JOSEPH HENRY JACKSON

ERLE STANLEY GARDNER says —and firmly believes—that he has spent most of his life violating all the conventional rules for success.

The truth is that the course of his life has followed, almost exactly, the time-honored Alger-Optic formula. Gardner became a lawyer the hard way; without college training, he did janitor-work and spare-time typing for lawyers who seemed to him successful, and read law under them in the traditional style. He became a writer because he shrugged off rejection slips and spent nights and Sundays writing new stories to send back to editors who had told him his others were bad. He became a successful manufacturer of the Gardner brand of detective story partly because he hit upon the bright new notion of a lawyer-detective, but chiefly because he had gone through the tough routine of learning how an action yarn was put together. The parallel, when you look at it, is perfect. Gardner succeeded because he kept working. The only success rules he broke were those that didn't matter anyway.

Gardner was born in Malden, Massachusetts, on July 17, 1889. Because his father knew about gold dredges, the boy grew up in a lot of odd places, mostly ramshackle little towns all the way from the Klondike to the latter-day mining camps of northern California. At seventeen, perhaps because he had knocked about so much, certainly because he was a solid, chunky boy, strong for his age and aggressive in temperament, he thought of becoming a professional fighter. Sometimes fighters made pretty good money, and Gardner always had the money flair. He even went so far as to do a little random training, and got himself two or three four-round fights up in Butte County, California, where his father was busy sifting gold out of the old river beds.

It was this tentative stab at the ring that led him to the law. He had been in and out of several high schools, taking none of them very seriously, and college was a very brief interlude. But he saw that even his haphazard education might be made to deliver more than he was getting out of it. And when the Deputy District Attorney heard a whisper about an unlicensed fight and had young Gardner up for a talking-to, it occurred to the boy that perhaps the right side of the law had its advantages. He quit the ring and started on the job he had set himself, working by day and studying by night until he had soaked up enough of the law-books to take the examinations. He was admitted to the Bar in California when he had just turned twenty-one.

The next five years were hard going. A friend of his fighting days told him that the town of Oxnard, in southern California, looked like a good place for a young attorney to start in business. Gardner went to see, liked it, and hung out his shingle. Business came very slowly. For one thing, the young lawyer had few of the social graces; he didn't dance, had never learned to play whist, much less this new bridge-whist that was coming in, drank little, and cared less than nothing for small talk. There were several young fellows in town from the big eastern law schools, too, and that made things no easier. Gardner was anxious to work; he had studied hard, now he wanted to use what he had learned. Perhaps he would have done well to cultivate his fellow sprigs of the law, but he had little in common with them. "They thought I was crude," he says, "and I thought they were saps." He was married in 1912 to Natalie Talbot of Mississippi, and they have one daughter.

Much of his early practice was with the local Chinese who came to him with a tough case and stuck by him afterward because he kept them out of jail. In fact, Gardner's crude habit of keeping his clients out of jail was almost his undoing. Some of the respectable citizens of Oxnard thought that the clients he so consistently got off might better have had less shrewd lawyers and stayed behind bars. But Gardner stuck to it and made a living. What he learned from and about his Chinese friends in those days is grist to his fiction-mill now.

It was during this period that he and a partner took a fling at serving Mammon directly, without Blackstone as middleman. Through a law case, they found themselves mixed up with the affairs of a sales agency, and because the job looked interesting Gardner took on the management of the company when it was offered him. He didn't drop the law entirely; for that matter, he has never dropped it. But he thought selling might be something to try, just on the side. What he sold exactly, and where and how he sold it or them—these details he waves away. "I did all right," he admits. "They made me president after a while." Three years of it was enough, however. In 1921 he joined with three others and set up law offices in the nearby but larger city of Ventura. He had had a crack at prize-fighting, at running a small law practice on his own, at business. Now he was ready to settle into harness. He was just thirty-two.

Essentially Gardner is an experimenter. His temperament, or his glandular set-up, or maybe just his natural contrariness will never allow him to let well enough alone. That habit of mind was what led him into his next venture. Why he got the idea of becoming a writer he doesn't quite know, nor can he explain how it first occurred to him or what made him think he could succeed at writing. For some reason he sat down one day in the spring of 1923, thought up two jokes and mailed them to the *Chicago Herald-Examiner*. Then, stimulated by this creative effort, he had another inspiration, this time for something he describes vaguely as a "short skit." He wrote that out and sent it to *Young's Magazine*. The check from the newspaper arrived early in July, his lucky month. It was for two dollars. Three days later, Young's sent him ten dollars for the skit. A little dizzy with the simplicity of the thing, he invented the pen-name of "Charles M. Green," wrote a detective story under it, and sold it to *Black Mask*. This writing business

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seemed to work. You thought of plots, put them down on paper, mailed them to magazines, and editors sent you back checks for them. Much as he liked the law, story-telling did seem to have distinct possibilities.

Gardner likes to obey his impulses, but he has also a sound canny streak in him. He kept on writing, but only in his spare time. At the end of the first year he added up his checks and found that he had made $974 from his stories. That wasn't much, but he felt he could do better if he kept on. He did better. He broadened his field, experimented recklessly. Everything he knew or had seen or done went into the hopper. He wrote Westerns, more detective stories, confession yarns, motor-tour articles, pieces about hunting and fishing, disquisitions on archery. A lot of them came back, but more and more of them stuck. In his fifth year, he made $6,627. Plainly his notion about writing was worth pursuing. Immediately he did two things. He arranged to cut down his time at the law-office, and he bought an electric typewriter.

Those two moves allowed him to step up production. Four more years brought him to the point where he could call himself a success. His books show that in 1931, depression or not, his income just from writing was $20,525. It had taken something over a million words to earn that much, but the electric typewriter made it possible. He still hadn't written a book; practically all this came from the pulp-paper magazines whose editors had learned to like the Gardner brand because their readers did. Editors liked Gardner himself, anyway, because he was reliable, never went prima-donna on them, met his deadlines, kept up the quality of his output. He has always been excessively businesslike. Indeed, his passion for keeping precise records enables him to turn to his files and bring out what he calls "a good cross-section of a successful month." Here, for instance, is the story of May, 1931:

Date	*Title*	*Words*
May 7	"On Top of the Heap"	16,000
May 11	"Promise to Pay"	14,000
May 12	"Muscle Man"	10,000
May 15	"No Rough Stuff"	12,500
May 18	"Make It Snappy"	10,500
May 20	"The Whip Hand"	8,000
May 21	"Turn of the Tide"	5,500
May 23	"The Glove Mystery"	11,500
May 25	"The First Stone"	12,500
May 30	"The Play's the Thing"	17,000
May 31	"Hot Squat"	15,000

On the whole, apparently, Gardner was pleased with that month, for below these eloquent figures he scrawled the notation, "No rejections—no revisions." Four of the stories were sold to *Detective Fiction Weekly;* two to *Detective Action Magazine* and two to *Black Mask;* and one each to *Argosy, Gang World,* and *Detective Story Magazine.* Still, seven years after the fact, he feels that it was not quite perfect. As he looked at the card out of his file he explained it further. "You see," he said, "I didn't get into production during the first week of May at all. As I recall it, that was because I was trying a case. But from there on, I averaged a story every second day." Then he added, "But I was getting ready to go to China then, and I nearly killed myself trying to learn some Chinese in odd moments." That, of course, may be the clue to the regrettable unproductive interval of five whole days between "The First Stone" and "The Play's the Thing." It almost looks as though *Black Mask* came very near not getting that "Hot Squat" story. Gardner, however, did get to China. Since he couldn't be sure of juice to keep his electric typewriter going, he took along two secretary-typists. No sense in wasting time, not when you could carry your fiction-factory with you.

Very often a change in surroundings does things to people. Gardner doesn't say that it was the sights and smells of the Orient that brought about his shift in direction, but at any rate something did. The stream of sure-fire pulp material did not dwindle, but an extra rivulet had begun to trickle in Gardner's active imagination. The first evidence of it was late in 1932. The editorial staff of William Morrow, Inc., had just made up its mind that too many detective stories were appearing in book form in America, and decided to accept nothing more of that kind for six months, when two mystery manuscripts came into the office. Nobody there had ever heard of the author, one Erle Stanley Gardner. But everyone was instantly attracted by the curious titles he chose. One was "The Case of the Sulky Girl"; the other was "The Case of the Velvet Claws." The titles did the trick. The Morrow office read both stories and gave in. They brought out both of them in 1933 at a decent six-month interval, and Gardner was launched in his new field. One after another, succeeding books proved that his invention of Perry Mason, lawyer and detective, and his knack at tantalizing titles were just what the mystery public had been waiting for. "The Case of the Lucky Legs," "The Case of the Curious Bride," "The Case of the Counterfeit Eye"—there was certainly something about them; there was a rhythm to them that one didn't forget. Gardner knew a good thing when he saw it. He stuck to his Perry Mason and his odd titles, and his readers increased and multiplied. *Liberty Magazine* began serializing the stories. Next Hollywood fell in line, and Perry Mason came to life on the screen in the person of Warren William. Before you could say "The Case of the Stuttering Bishop," Gardner was appearing in *Cosmopolitan,* and, last year, *The Saturday Evening Post.* As for keeping this nice, shiny ball rolling, that was easy. Gardner simply invented some more detectives. Now his Terry Clane and Douglas Selby are acquiring the same sort of following that Perry Mason earned his author. You may have noticed, by the way, that this Selby person has the same initials as Perry Mason's secretary, Della Street. You never can tell about Gardner's hunches; he gets notions that certain combinations are lucky and sticks to them like grim death. None of his other stories, for example, are titled in the same rhythm as the Perry Mason thrillers. Terry Clane has to be content with ordinary trochaic titles like "Murder Up My Sleeve." Only Perry Mason himself may detect in the scrambled anapests of "The Case of the Substitute Face."

Gardner no longer brings out index-cards to demonstrate the success of a given month or year. The climb into the big time has brought about complications, and the secretaries that enabled him to keep to his schedule while he toured the Orient now keep all financial details under their capable thumbs. There is always a second, and often a third secretary hidden away somewhere, if not actually working with him on the road. For Gardner is still restless, still likes change. Most of the time he is on the move in two specially designed trailers, following the sun; wintertime in the deserts of the

"Most of the time he is on the move in two specially designed trailers . . ."

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Southwest (last year he took the whole caravan down the new International Highway into Mexico City), summertime up in the California Sierra, the Cascades, even over into the Rockies. Or perhaps he takes a liking to a particular place and holes in for a while. New Orleans is latest on the list of cities he likes; he spent all of three months there this spring.

The electric typewriter had to go, of course. You can't run it on a trailer wall-plug, and anyway Gardner's recent schedules have required too fast a pace for a mere machine. With his secretaries, and a dictaphone battery, he really is equipped to write. And when he gets too far ahead of the secretaries, a reserve supply of fiction can always be stored away on cylinders. Terry Clane may be busily trailing his sinister Chinese enemies through the pothooks of Gregg, but meantime the next Perry Mason is safely canned in twenty-six corrugated cardboard cartons. Maybe, if Gardner has thought of a plot for the new Douglas Selby mystery and is itching to start on it the wax records go by express back to Hollywood. That's what a relief secretary is for. At such times he toys with the notion of hiring a fourth secretary, but he has done nothing about it yet. A man must relax once in a while. Each time he decides against adding to his staff he sighs happily, gets out his bow and arrow and wanders off to puncture a rabbit or two, or perhaps a dozen tin cans. Doing anything, in his view, is more satisfactory than doing nothing.

So far, his high-pressure labors seem to agree with him. He has filled out since he grew up, but you couldn't call him really overweight. "Solid" is a better word; he's about five feet eight inches tall, weighs somewhere around 190 pounds, and walks with the same light step he learned in his days in the ring. His grip is powerful and nervous; when he shakes hands he does it as though he meant it. He likes to live out of doors and spends a good deal of his income doing just that in the way that suits him. When his bankers ask him what provision he has made for the future and mutter gloomily about men burning themselves out, Gardner reminds them that people who burn themselves out usually do their smouldering in offices and in night spots. For himself, he has never learned to like alcohol much, and smokes only casually, like a man trying something new. The amount of work he gets out does mean a high degree of concentration, necessitates immense vitality. But if you mention it he reminds you that lots of other people have worked harder. "Take Edgar Wallace, for instance," he says. "That man had me cheated forty ways for Sunday." If you suggest that after all Edgar Wallace is dead, he has his reply ready. "Sure he's dead," says Gardner, "but he didn't shoot with the bow and arrow!"

Joseph Henry Jackson is literary editor of the San Francisco Chronicle.

The Armed Truce

ACROSS THE FRONTIERS. By Philip Gibbs. New York: Doubleday, Doran & Co. 1938. $3.

Reviewed by EUGENE LYONS

IF there is still any one who doubts that our world is in a bad way, Sir Philip Gibbs's latest commentary on the European scene, "Across the Frontiers," should make the pessimism unanimous. Surveying the international picture twenty years after the war he reported so brilliantly, Sir Philip finds it utterly disheartening. The peace "has been only an armed truce broken by isolated wars which threatened to engulf all the old combatants again; and by revolutions, violent episodes, political passions and dangerous forces stirring beneath the thin crust on which we stand." Christian ethics have broken down, democracy is on the defensive and defending itself poorly, "the areas of civilization . . . are shrinking."

The British journalist makes a brave effort to distill some drops of hope. For all its floundering, British democracy "is still working fairly well." Even the totalitarian leaders of Europe, he thinks, are frightened by the specters of war and the threatened collapse of civilization. Hitler himself, perhaps, really means it when he offers peace. The obvious difficulty Sir Philip experiences in seeking out the hopeful elements, however, somehow deepens the over-all impression of hopelessness.

Although there is little if any new factual material in this volume, the author's views are always stimulating, and at points sharply provocative. The section on "The New Germany," in particular, deserves close reading. It adds up to a passionate plea for a dispassionate approach to Hitlerism. Without suggesting approval of the bloodier aspects of Nazi fanaticism, racial persecution, and cultural retrogressions, Sir Philip argues that outside criticism has been unduly harsh. "Other countries put under the searchlight of hostile criticism," he writes, "would not get full marks for moral and spiritual blamelessness."

Coming from Sir Philip Gibbs, his plea for tolerance toward the Hitler regime has particular significance as reflecting a trend in English political opinion. His anxiety to find some silver patches under the Nazi cloud betrays him into some nonsensical pages on Hitler's intentions in relation to Austria. He reproves the press for excessive suspicion in this regard—but even before he finished writing his book the reality made the suspicions seem mild by contrast. "I leave these words as they were written before the disappearance of Austria as an independent State," he says courageously in a footnote, and adds an Epilogue that tries weakly to find some consolation in the Austrian tragedy.

Throughout the volume Sir Philip takes liberals to task for their self-righteousness, urging them to "be quite sure that we are as noble as we think we are." Democracy cannot overcome dictatorship, he warns, "unless it can prove its capability of producing happiness, and the general welfare of those who enjoy its blessings. . . . There is more at stake in this dangerous world than the pressure of races or power politics. The civilized mind is at stake."

The lineaments of that danger are powerfully traced throughout the volume, particularly in chapters such as those on the Jewish problem, and on the "stricken" League of Nations.

Grecian refugees. Drawing by Edgar Lander, from "Across the Frontier."

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Reports from Two Fronts

China's Red Troops

CHINA FIGHTS BACK: AN AMERICAN WOMAN WITH THE EIGHTH ROUTE ARMY. By Agnes Smedley. New York: Vanguard Press. 1938. $2.50.

Reviewed by DAVID H. POPPER

ANY book from the pen of Agnes Smedley, that redoubtable fighter for the rights of the underdog, is an exciting event, particularly at a moment when she is witnessing at first hand one of the great conflicts of history. For with the possible exception of Edgar Snow, no American is better qualified by temperament or experience to write of China's resistance to Japan from the viewpoint of the Chinese Communists, its most steadfast proponents. Since 1929 Miss Smedley has interpreted Chinese Communism to the world. She spent most of 1937 in the Communist districts and among the forces of the Red—now the Eighth Route—Army. Although suffering from a painful spinal injury, she traveled uncounted miles over rugged country, with a typewriter strapped to her back and an entourage of only a few guards. Pain, weariness, cold, hunger, and even, occasionally, the lack of candles prevented her from writing more than a rough draft for submission to her publishers.

Hence we can understand the rather thin and disorganized nature of "China Fights Back." It is essentially a diary of Miss Smedley's adventures with the Army, written day by day from August 19, 1937 to January 9 last. It details her Odyssey with the mobile Red troops, back and forth through Shansi province. It depicts the successes of these forces in guerrilla warfare against the invading Japanese, their remarkable ability to overcome the greatest difficulties of supply and transport, and their unparalleled progress in organizing Chinese peasants and workers to aid the national cause. In short, Miss Smedley has given us an inside view of the opposition the Japanese must overcome if they are to conquer the real China—the rural China stretching endlessly beyond the cities and railway lines the Japanese now call their own.

Scattered through the spare catalogue of daily triumphs and tribulations of the Communists appear fascinating vignettes of Chinese life. The troops, politically disciplined and personally self-restrained to an extraordinary degree, think little of a seventy-mile march on foot in a single day. The first steps are taken to break down the medieval habits of Chinese who cannot be persuaded to believe in the existence of invisible germs, or who regard a needle as a precious treasure and gape in astonishment at locomotives, moving pictures, and other oddities of Western civilization. The diaries of Japanese captives and Japanese dead, expressing dissatisfaction with the war, are utilized with telling effect by a marvelous Communist propaganda machine. The old-line Chinese war lords fatalistically predict and suffer defeat, while those who survive it strive desperately to organize widespread popular resistance after the Communist model. Chinese intellectuals are challenged for their complacent indifference to the fate of the common soldier. Some foreign missionaries find it impossible to envisage successful Chinese armies; others, half instinctively, assist even the Communists in the struggle for an independent China.

Over and above the incidents and the explanations rises the blazing sincerity

Agnes Smedley with her "hsiao kwey" ("little devil")—a combination of page, foster son, and imp.

of Miss Smedley, a devoted partisan who confesses to "passionate likes and dislikes," yet strives always to tell the truth as she sees it. Today, in her mind, the social struggle in China must be subordinated to the overriding task of beating back the Japanese imperialist drive. But the final victory must and will be delayed until China is freed from the grip of entrenched wealth and privilege—until the reforms demanded by the Communists are consummated. To those who subscribe to it this is an inspiring, an intoxicating creed. Agnes Smedley's greatest contribution is to have transferred from life to the pages of her book something of the spirit in which it is being furthered.

David H. Popper is on the staff of the Foreign Policy Association.

Spanish Background

THE MARTYRDOM OF SPAIN. By Alfred Mendizabal. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons. 1938. $3.

REVOLUTION AND COUNTER-REVOLUTION IN SPAIN. By Felix Morrow. New York: Pioneer Publishers. 1938. $1.

Reviewed by DAVID LOTH

TAKEN together, these books by a Liberal Catholic and a Trotskyite Marxist offer a clearer account of the Spanish Civil War than perhaps either of the authors intended. Their picture of a people's martyrdom lies in the shadows that they cast rather than in the light of what they actually say.

For me they have evoked the image of a brisk, busy little man of whom neither Professor Mendizabal nor Mr. Morrow ever heard. Dr. Alberti was only a youngish provincial physician, whose smile was never gay but whose patients usually recovered. He was always in such a hurry that the elaborate formalities of Castilian courtesy rattled from his lips with the effect of a careless "Hiya, toots." Sometimes his thin face relaxed into gentler folds, and then you might know the Doctor was talking about a state-supported system of sanitation and public health. The death rate could be brought down from eighteen to twelve, he used to say with a reverence inspired in Professor Mendizabal by the Pope and in Mr. Morrow by Lenin.

Dr. Alberti was in the first batch of dangerous radicals arrested by the fascist rebels, and I hope they had the decency to shoot him. That his eager efficiency should be condemned to idleness in one of those horrible stone rooms of Castle Bellver (which we used to show to tourists as relics of medieval barbarism), that his quick, sure, gentle fingers have been shackled or must pick nervously at nothing through the endless days—these are not thoughts that help us who loved him to sleep at night.

Well, Dr. Alberti is finished. Between them, Professor Mendizabal and Mr. Morrow explain why, for those who can read beyond the printed lines. So reading, we see disaster rolling up inexorably, relentlessly to overwhelm the simple, kindly aspirations of Dr. Alberti and thousands like him, crushing doctors and workers and peasants and gentlemen and all the friendly, sturdy people.

Señor Mendizabal's account of that martyrdom was written before the blood began to flow. Professor of the Philosophy of Law at the University of Oviedo, he traces in these articles the inevitable fate of his nation from the Primo de Rivera dictatorship of 1923 to the triumph of the Popular Front in 1936. He takes us

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through the last days of the monarchy, the vicissitudes of the republic, the "Red October" of 1934, and the final fascist uprising, for which he finds no excuse. "The Martyrdom of Spain" is an eloquently liberal version, none the less so because the author is of those Catholics who recognize the fundamental error of tying their Church by coarse, temporal bonds to the State.

His is a liberalism which Mr. Morrow regards as more dangerous than the fascism both wish to destroy. As "The Martyrdom of Spain" expounds the failures of men of good will, so "Revolution and Counter-Revolution in Spain" enables us to understand why the people never attained that exalted fanaticism by which alone the masses can overcome a better organized, better equipped minority. The "bourgeois-Stalinist bloc" betrayed the Revolution, cries Mr. Morrow. However that may be, the gulf between the leaders was so deep that their people were lost in it, and over the grave of their hopes the spirit of Dr. Alberti must be sighing:

"We wanted to give them life, not death."

David Loth, who is now on the staff of the New York Times, *shortly before the outbreak of the Spanish Civil War conducted an English language paper on the island of Majorca.*

Oriental Fairy Stories

CHINESE FAIRY TALES AND FOLK TALES. Collected and translated by Wolfram Eberhard. New York: E. P. Dutton & Co. 1938. $3.

Reviewed by FLORENCE AYSCOUGH

WOLFRAM EBERHARD has confined himself, in this collection, to the fairy tales and folk tales of China as told by the peasants. The sophisticated fantasies of literati like P'u Sung-ling are put aside. There speak to us from these pages, in all naiveté, the men, women, and children of the Chinese masses.

The tales are delightful. They have the same serious fairy element which permeates the work of Hans Christian Andersen. The situations, too, often resemble situations in our fairy tales, and characters are frequently analogous. One great difference there is. Dragons, creatures of terror to the Western mind, are, to the Chinese, benevolent saurians. A visit to the Palace of the Dragon King, far under the sea, always brings good results. A whole company of dragons writhe through the pages of the book, while a delectable little white member of the family saves the hero in tale number one.

Folklorists, and all who delight in magic, must rejoice that Wolfram Eberhard, assisted by his able translator, the late Desmond Parsons, have made available to the Western world a storehouse of fascinating lore.

True Believers

I LIKE AMERICA. By Granville Hicks. New York: Modern Age Books. 1938. 50 cents.

READING FROM LEFT TO RIGHT. By Robert Forsythe. Illustrated by William Gropper. New York: Covici-Friede. 1938. $2.

Reviewed by ELMER DAVIS

ST. PAUL on Mars' Hill was trying to sell a new apocalyptic religion to the highbrows, and these two volumes have a similar purpose. Granville Hicks and the gentleman who, when he writes for the *New Masses*, calls himself Robert Forsythe are communist intellectuals—and not the sort of intellectuals who have embraced communism to meet a need that Buchmanism or Dale Carnegie would serve about as well; they mean it. Hicks frankly addresses educated bourgeois like himself; Forsythe, for all his proletkult insistence on the superiority of the workers of the world to "the dimwits who are still catered to by the *New Yorker*," deals with topics more likely to interest readers of the *New Yorker* than those of the tabloids or the *Evening Journal*. Unfortunately St. Paul did not go so very big on Mars' Hill; he was unconvincing on the critical point of his argument, the identity of the deity he preached with the unknown god to whom the Athenians had erected an altar. At this same point, Mr. Hicks, too, falls down.

None the less his book (one of the handsomest of Modern Age productions) is highly respectable from any point of view—the work of a good citizen, a humane and intelligent man, who knows his country's faults but loves it anyway because he believes those faults can and will be corrected. He is a communist—but because he loves people, not because he hates people. Starting with a simple but extremely effective picture of his own life and its satisfactions, he goes on to pictures that are not so pleasant, pictures of the vast amount of privation and misery and hopelessness still existing in the richest country of the world. It will be hard to challenge his accuracy; and no decent person can read his survey without feeling, as he does, that something must be done about it.

But what? He offers no evidence but his own conviction that the trinity of Marx, Engels, and Lenin is the Unknown God in whom alone is salvation; he even admits that honest people may disagree with him, and seek salvation by other means—a survival of bourgeois morality that might get him shot as a wrecker if the Good Cause ever triumphs. He would obviously prefer that it should triumph without having to shoot anybody, even capitalists. Earl Browder, at the moment, talks that way too, but Hicks had better keep his eye on the party line. It has changed, and could change again.

On essentials of the faith, however, he is sound. "There has been nothing in the history of the Soviet Union to frighten or discourage us." A little repression, perhaps, a shortage of liberty? Nonsense; the Russians are free to do anything they want to do and they wouldn't want to do what is forbidden. Most of them, that is; if you are suspected as a spy, "the explanation is not that the government is tyrannous but that spies are plentiful and dangerous," if you are afraid to say what you think, the answer is that there are traitors. If the Soviets have to be careful, it is because "the old ruling classes have been their implacable enemies." One is left to infer that these old ruling classes are strong and dangerous still, because the government has been too merciful to liquidate them.

Hicks, who lost a college teaching job because of his political opinions, is properly indignant at American restrictions on academic freedom. In Russia he would have perfect liberty to teach anything that pleased the administration—just as he had in Troy, New York. The offence is greater, of course, in a country which professes to believe in free speech; but men who have been dealt with by the Ogpu (or the NKVD which is liquidating Ogpu officials) do not often survive to write books denouncing their oppressors.

That a proletarian dictatorship will be necessary in America, too, Hicks has *de fide*, but this means only that "while the profit system is being replaced we will be gaining liberty and Big Business will be losing it." Theoretically it seems possible that this simple formula could tell the whole story, but communist practice has been more complex. However, "after socialism is established liberty can become a universal possession" and history will begin. How long will that take? Maybe not so long as you think, says Hicks hopefully. But it seems to be taking quite a while in Russia, where a Founding Father shot for deviationist sabotage is just as dead as a recalcitrant capitalist. It would be pleasant to believe that the practice of communism so accords with the instincts of a kindly man; but if the New Day ever dawns over America, Brother Hicks had better keep his mouth buttoned up.

Mr. Robert Forsythe is totalitarian enough for any taste, barring a certain impatience with intellectual converts to communism who pontificate about labor without ever having labored; and he sounds as if he would serve on a firing squad with pleasure. It has been said that he is the only communist humorist; if this book is a fair specimen, that uni-

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corn is still a fabulous animal. You have to be a True Believer to get much of a laugh out of his scenes from the home life of King George and Sinclair Lewis, and it certainly takes no Daniel Boone to hit such targets as Lucius Beebe's shirt front and the expansive form of George Sokolsky.

However, he has protected himself in advance against unsympathetic reviews by observing that no "louse was ever swayed from being a louse by satire." This pediculous commentator, thus disarmed, can only say that to understand all is to forgive all. Under his own name, Forsythe is a downtrodden mujik compelled to do objective reporting, mostly of sports, under the capitalist lash. He does it well, but naturally he gets a bellyfull of objectivity during office hours, and when he sits down to write for the *New Masses* he can let himself go. Sometimes —on Shaw, on Bronson Cutting, on effective writing—he says things which seem pointed and intelligent even to those who do not share his dogmas; but when he deals with people he doesn't like he is about as discriminating and as fair as Frank Hague.

Tennessee People

THE DOCTOR'S PILLS ARE STARDUST. By Charles G. Givens. Indianapolis: The Bobbs-Merrill Co. 1938. $2.50.

Reviewed by HOWARD MUMFORD JONES

IN the novel with this extraordinary title Mr. Givens returns to the valley and the people he described in "All Cats Are Gray," a readable, if sprawling, book about lost valley hamlets in Tennessee. The first was built around a lawyer; the second about a doctor, and in both the narrative, the people, and the place are seen through the eyes of a young protégé of the principal character. In both the young narrator is inclined to snoot the locale and patronize his patron until he learns that a heart of gold can beat beneath a homespun vocabulary. Young Bob Hunter marries a "Ridge girl" with whom he is in love, and goes to an inferior medical school against his better judgment in order to carry on the work of Dr. Sheppard Hunter, his uncle. Why, since he comes into money, he should not go to a first-class medical school in the interests of his people, is far from clear.

"The Doctor's Pills" has the same lusty, he-man talk, the same pictures of a rigidly stratified rural society, and the same basic sentimentalism as its predecessor, but it is a better built book because the author has resisted the temptation to digress. As a genre picture it is, like the first novel, human and entertaining. But with all its richness of observed detail, and its racy and accurate conversation, the book somehow does not get deeply enough beneath the skin of any character or set of characters to make it memorable.

Modest Adventurer

GOOSE FEATHERS. By George Digby. New York: E. P. Dutton & Co. 1938. $3.

Reviewed by HASSOLDT DAVIS

THIS autobiography is exceptional in that it touches only the high spots of the author's life instead of spreading all of it thin as the average writer with his first book, and that a personal one, is tempted to do. George Digby lacks the arrogance to tell of his comparatively uneventful years in Australia and Canada, and so concentrates upon the three countries which impressed him most, writing very simply of his adventures in them and commenting with caution upon the eastern world.

At the age of seventeen he found himself the manager of a large division of a tea plantation in Ceylon, and in the first year made it notable for produce and the improvement in his coolie's health. He left Ceylon for the ranches of Australia and then sailed to cover the mandated territories of New Guinea for an Australian paper. Part of his charm is his great sympathy with all conditions of men. His heart went out to the German planters of New Guinea, the humble, noncombatant expatriates, who were so cruelly harried during the war, and he tried even to understand the cannibals still active today. He panned gold and shot the forbidden Bird of Paradise. He was a journalist in Japan, but he didn't like the people because they lacked a sense of humor. The invalid Russian child, to whom he told fairy stories on the jonquil island, was his single bright spot there, though his life was never dull.

Mr. Digby is an assuming adventurer. He thinks of his life as being unproductive, but the reader of this book is unlikely to agree with him, for he has lived handsomely and intelligently, and written a yarn to keep at least one drowsy reviewer wide-eyed awake.

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Can College Graduates Read?

(*Continued from page 4*)

as we could and observe for ourselves the fascinating ways of life which people had built up for themselves about the world.

Old Professor Thomas Seymour did something of the same thing for my generation at Yale by teaching Greek not simply as cross-word puzzles in translation but as a door to the culture and literature of this amazingly creative people. He kept many of us digging in the library for days because he told us—with restrained illustrations—that most of the skits in modern burlesque shows were based on the Comedies of Aristophanes. After prolonged and fascinating research we found that they were.

It has been said that one of the faults of organized education is that the teacher asks the questions, whereas in normal life it is the child and the growing youth who is always doing the asking. And it is the business of the college, the Carnegie report states, to increase rather than to suppress the number of the students' questions. The customary procedure, however, "puts [the student] to bed like a troublesome child by safely tucking him into fixed courses which he can neither hasten nor retard and from which there is no escape. Since he is expected to accept these as they develop, it too often occurs that his curiosity is effectually stilled and his real enthusiasms are gradually diverted to extracurricular concerns in which his own initiative is permitted to count." Certainly true education proceeds as the curiosity of the student is stirred to desire ever greater and greater knowledge and is impelled to reflect and assimilate so that his information may be leavened by understanding.

The Carnegie report, by a systematic survey of the schools and colleges of a whole state, gives damning evidence that there are all too few instances of this kind of education. It makes vehement protest against the rigid course system which gives a student not knowledge and intelligent understanding but disconnected bits of unrelated information. One of the great evils of our system of education, the report states, is the building of the college curriculum around the "average" student when in reality there is no average but a large number of individuals of different grades of intelligence and ability. Each of these students should and must be given the opportunity and the privilege of developing himself unrestricted by what the "average" can or cannot do. The fundamental conclusion of the study, therefore, is that the object of the college or of any other educational institution must be the self-education of the student.

As a basis for aid to this self-education, the report suggests four essentials: (1) The college should have knowledge of the student's mental, physical, and social attainments so that he may be understood and helped. (2) It should prepare, in the light of the student's own goal, a tentative forecast of what he can hope to achieve. (3) It should make provision for the right kind of teaching—if and as the student himself finds it needed—and for libraries and laboratories which he may use at his convenience. (4) It should provide for regular measurement and analysis of his progress in knowledge and of his character and disposition.

I heartily agree to this four-point program, though it is going to be terribly hard to put it into effect in our large institutions which are accustomed to mass production by routine lectures, assignments in texts, and periodic tests as to the quantity of information acquired. Until the coming of the millennium when schools and colleges, as advocated in this report, will be working with the individual needs of the students, I suggest that a large part of the desired result may be obtained by concentrating on point three, by throwing the burden of education from the teacher to the student. In broad fields of learning the student may well be left to dig out knowledge for himself from the library and the laboratory, the faculty being regarded as aides and assistants to the student rather than as task masters to him. A number of colleges are doing this now. Swarthmore is increasingly following this plan for her honor students; the Harvard reading periods and the programs of several experimental colleges are in this direction.

It may be true that many boys and girls now in American colleges are not sufficiently intelligent or responsible to take initiative in their own education. If so the sooner that fact is brought into the open and a divorce effected between these uncongenial parties the better. For if a person cannot take a leading part in his own education at the higher levels, no power on earth can do it for him. A great part of the congestion and confusion in American colleges is caused by the attempt to force education into masses of students who are incapable or unwilling to receive it. The best measure of the student's capacity to be educated is his ability to read and study for himself.

Of course reading does not cover the whole of the development of a well-rounded individual. Skill and expression in many lines are desirable, especially in these days of increasing leisure. But so far as intellectual attainment goes, books are the great tools. Reading is the greatest of the commandments in education: reading for pleasure, reading for information, reading for understanding and insight into personal and social problems. Books and more books in the schools and in the homes is the surest way to produce an educated nation.

Edwin R. Embree, president of the Julius Rosenwald Fund, is the author of several books on education.

Good Customer

OUR TRADE WITH BRITAIN: Bases for a Reciprocal Tariff Agreement. By Percy Wells Bidwell. New York: Council on Foreign Relations. 1938. $1.50.

Reviewed by GEORGE FORT MILTON

SOME highly important negotiations are now under way at Washington, as a result of which the governments of the United States and Great Britain hope to establish the basis for an actively increased trade between the two great English-speaking nations. This is a case—and there are not any too many of them—where God and Mammon can coöperate in a common program. In his volume, Professor Bidwell has assembled the data demonstrating beyond cavil that Britain is our best customer. Through historical background and statistical proof he demonstrates why it would be a definite cash advantage to both countries to lift the levels of interchange between us.

Together they represent at least half of the world's trade today. If one adds the Dominions, the proportion grows; of our own exports and imports it comes to almost three-fifths. To a large extent the present condition is of rival and competing suns, each having its attendant planetary system. Any such situation necessarily results in strains, tensions, upsets, and jars between the two, with harmful repercussions on the world economy. The present aim is to bring the two stars closer together.

There have been many obstacles to such an agreement. In the blind and fatuous Smoot-Hawley tariff, the United States virtually invited the British Commonwealth of Nations to retaliate through the Ottawa Agreement and its Dominion Preferences. And in a few short months they proved to us that two could play at the game of prohibitive tariffs. The chief victims were our agricultural exports; these dead exports made live surpluses, thus starting the whole unhappy chain of subsidies and controls from which our agriculture still suffers.

The time came when we repented of our error; but the British had committed themselves for five years, and could not deal with us without the consent of those Dominions which were enjoying the preferences. Eventually Canada and Australia, the chief beneficiaries, began to feel that a closer economic association between the Commonwealth and the United States was important enough for them to give up some of their special advantages.

At any event, the parleys with the United Kingdom are proceeding and rumor has it that definite conclusions might be announced by late July or August. It is a consummation devoutly to be hoped.

George Fort Milton, editor of The Chattanooga News, *recently completed an assignment as special assistant to the Secretary of State.*

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Where People Read

THE GEOGRAPHY OF READING. A Study of the Distribution and Status of Libraries in the United States. By Louis R. Wilson. Chicago: American Library Association and the University of Chicago Press. 1938. $4.

Reviewed by THEODORE MALCOLM

AGAIN the American Library Association and the University of Chicago, through its Graduate Library School, should be given credit for leadership in the study of reading in this country. They have envisaged the need for analyzing reading in all its complicated relationships, and with singleness of purpose they return repeatedly to the attack.

The most recent product of their efforts is "The Geography of Reading." This label is apt to be a misnomer unless taken together with the subtitle. It is probably not unfair to think of the book as a companion volume to "People and Print,"* published last year. This was a summing up of the qualitative aspects of reading which are understood today; the present book views the matter from a quantitative standpoint.

"The Geography of Reading" is a gathering together of recent studies of public library reading as it varies from state to state and from city to rural area. Through the employment of plenty of graphs and charts, the book presents interestingly a mass of material, some of it new. Yet when all's said and done, the 400-odd pages fall short of their mark. The reader without statistical training is given little with which he knows what to do.

For all their prolific production, the Chicago group somehow fail again to measure up to their responsibilities. People whose work is books need help. This the Library School appears to be aware of; at least their writers never neglect to list the groups—from publishers to booksellers to librarians—who should make use of the material they are turning out. But they do not realize how few can apply their facts in the form in which they purvey them. Statistics are still pretty solid fare for most people.

The book aims to show the lamentable variation geographically in library facilities and service, then in conclusion to offer recommendations as to what should be done to correct the situation. But the poor public librarian looks in vain for a clue in all the tables of figures, the maps, and the charts as to how he can, by taking thought, make his work more effective.

Aside from the inadequacy of the book on the score of its asking a question, then not answering it in terms that people can do something about, "The Geography of Reading" has two technical faults that are fundamental to the whole presentation. First, the excellent technique of converting all figures into easily understood standard scores is used throughout the book—then lo and behold, the accompanying maps are based on data expressed in different units. And the reader is sure to be confused when he examines the maps, only to find that states in no two are shaded on the same basis—although comparison between the shading on various maps is frequent.

A second regrettable shortcoming is that though the book brings together more material on the geographical distribution of reading than has probably been published before between the covers of a single book, all of the figures are left in a semi-raw state, with hardly an effort at conclusion being made anywhere in the text. The correlating and interpreting of the figures is left entirely to the eager but statistically unqualified reader.

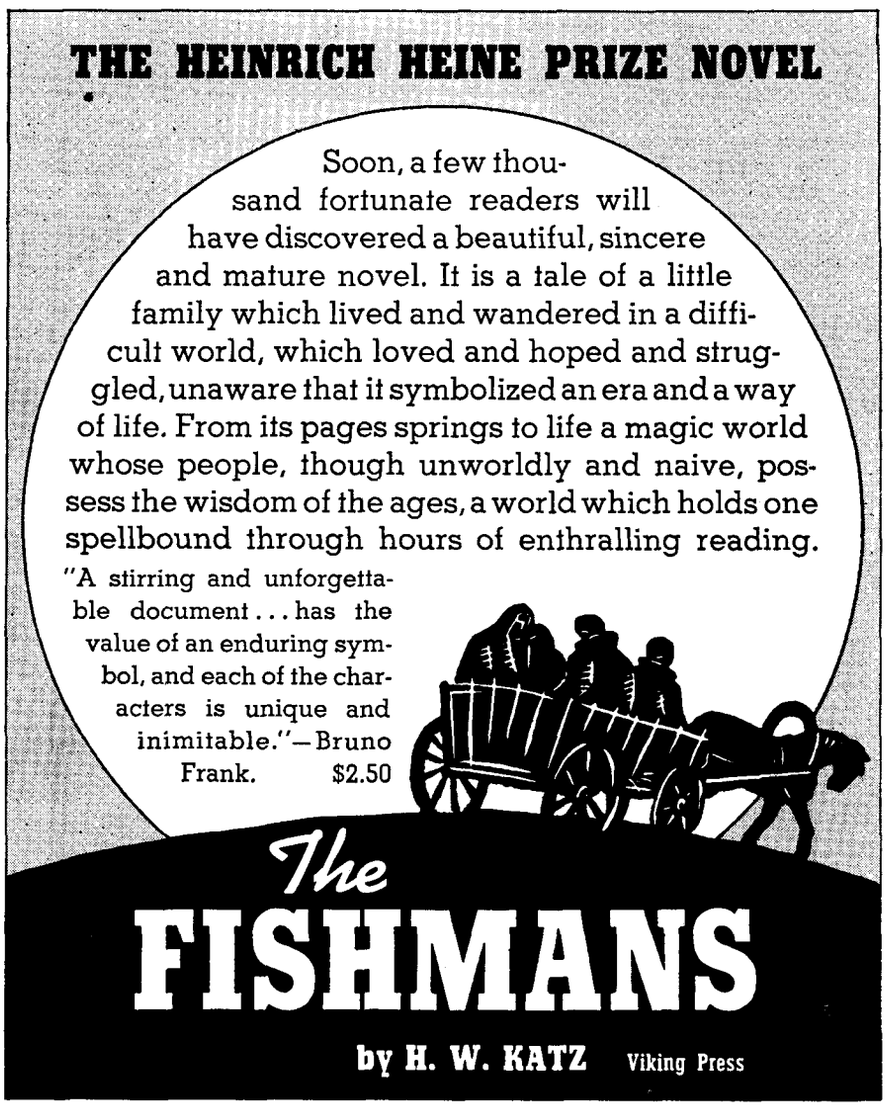
But it would not be fair to emphasize the book's shortcomings without mentioning its contributions. Chief among these is the standard score, a device already referred to, whereby every table showing figures by states is rendered comparable with every other such table. Pity of it is that these scores are not then used as the basis of the maps.

Through breaking down the United States into the six regions worked out by the National Resources Committee at Washington, the author is able to show the striking difference between people in different parts of the country and what they do with their money, in relation to reading-matter. And the wealth of tables and maps giving detailed state-by-state figures will reward the person who takes the time to study and compare them. In all likelihood these tables hold keys to reading habits and book sales—both of which nobody yet knows much about. But no indications of this character are to be found anywhere in the book.

Regret will be felt that "The Geography of Reading" is merely another compendium, that none of the matters treated in its pages are thought through. Such a piece of work would be an important contribution to the whole book world. Perhaps the University of Chicago's Graduate Library School will feel prompted some day to do this job.

Theodore Malcolm is director of research of the Book-of-the-Month Club.

* *PEOPLE AND PRINT. By Douglas Waples. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.* 1937.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The Artist and the State

THE SEVEN SOVIET ARTS. By Kurt London. New Haven: Yale University Press. 1938. $4.

Reviewed by GILBERT SELDES

I AM the last man to object to the appearance of a descriptive word between "seven" and "arts," but I confess that my hackles rose at the title of this book. Before I had opened it I was asking myself whether we should also have Fascist arts or neo-Trotskyist arts; in fact, I made rather a fool of myself, but the way of my folly brought up precisely the questions this book brings up. The title means, for the most part, the arts as practised in the USSR; the arts as practised there do differ in some respects from the arts as practised elsewhere—differ in purpose and in results. But Dr. London was not erecting a parallel in the arts to Marxian philosophy or Nazi biology or Fascist mathematics. His book is written in various tones of admiration and regret; it is first of all written by a man with a vast appetite for the satisfactions art can bring and with sufficient talent to communicate his pleasure; it is written by one aware of the alteration which events have made in the position of the artist; and as he deplores the exile (from art) of good men and women who depart from the party line, his book will give no joy to Purgists. Its information, balance, and enthusiasm should give pleasure to most others. For the sake of brevity, let us take the author's word for everything he says.

He says that after the Revolution, "art no longer remained the prerogative of select classes, but concerned the entire people. It ceased to be a luxury and became an essential component of the whole organization of society." He says we might learn "what organization can do to make art available to the people." And "writers in the Soviet Union are teachers of the people. Their task lies in the fascinating formation of the new life and the new society. . . . The beaux arts have become extraordinarily popular in the USSR. There are indeed no longer any unpopular arts there . . . In the Soviet Union every talented . . . artist is almost certain of being able to sell his works." The end of this statement I suppress temporarily. It comes under "debit account." Finally, "there is no single creative personality in the Union who has to suffer misery on financial grounds."

In this one-sided way I present one of the significant series of ideas London exposes. I can't see how any reader or writer can miss their bearing; every word is relevant to our situation. The one thing American writers have lacked, a definite sympathetic relation to their own people, is the one thing the Russians get without going through agonies of soul. The American artist has despised the American people; or pitied them; or expressed their soul in such terms that the American people either did not understand or understood too well and rejected the expression; or the artist has left America and longed for it for ever after. At the end of a century and a half we find vast numbers of American artists still out of sorts with America, still cross, still unamiable and unloving; and others finding the only way to establish any communication with America is by way of the class-conscious worker; and others still who create little realms of the mind and don't care what happens to the country, while in the USSR, artists are forming the new life and the new society. In Russia the artist knows his work is wanted; he creates in response to a demand (which he respects); and he is adequately paid. He may not make a fortune within the borders of the Soviet Union, but he is a privileged person, living as well as any other man, better than many.

It is clear that the people in all the Soviet Republics enjoy the arts. I wouldn't exaggerate this: art wasn't available for them, any more than dainty food, under the old regime; and just as they would gorge themselves on food, after starvation, they take in and enjoy vast amounts of art-work—the USSR has prospered the arts more than some other "consumers' goods" for a variety of reasons which any Marxist can supply. The enjoyment of the arts in the Soviets is not purely a phenomenon of communism; but communism has used large-scale production for the spread of all knowledge and—a point never to forget—it is easy for a people to appreciate arts which have been specifically created for that people.

At this point you can honorably look at the other side of the ledger. We have no instruments to measure psychological costs; we can't say, these things have been done, but they are the products of communism and communism is hateful. We simply do not know, in 1938, whether the soul of man under communism is corrupted or belittled. We do know that artists are happy under communism and that the people are happy in their artists. But that is not the whole of the account.

". . . No single work is staged anywhere in the entire Union," says London, "which has not, in respect of its content, its form, as well as the choice of its producer, scenic artist, composer, and the chief actors, received the blessing of the C. A. C." (the Central Art Committee, "a corporation of the central Government . . . controls organization and ideology of the most important arts throughout the entire territory of the USSR"). Is that blessing promptly given, to all aspirants? We now repeat a previous quotation, with its proper ending: "In the Soviet Union every talented . . . artist is almost certain of being able to sell his works *provided that he follows the political line in cultural matters.*" (The italics are mine, but the policy is Stalin's.) And: "Kavalleridze . . . one of the more prominent film directors, has become more careful since the ban on his film 'Prometheus.'" Finally there is the time element. Dr. London's book has a preface, written half a year after the text, and it is a record of "purges" in the arts; the very creators he praises in the body of the book are out of favor, disgraced, purged away.

Shall we bother to strike a balance between these magnificent achievements and these appalling conditions? Our moral bias compels us to, but we should at least know that some of the achievements are concrete, factual, verifiable: certain artists are not starving; certain numbers of people go to art exhibitions and write their opinions in a book provided for that purpose; thousands of young men and women receive training in the arts; special schools for film directors exist; eight million copies of the works of Pushkin were published; in 1937, about 750 books were issued, and the total number of copies was over twenty-two million.

I have extracted from this book only controversial points, trusting the reader to discover for himself its rich store of fact and its steady critical sense. I hope that the reader will respond as I did, with questions about the arts in our own country. Can we accomplish all the desirable things without destroying what the Soviets have destroyed: the independence, even if it is waywardness, of the artist? the variety of inspiration? the liberty (or is it the duty?) of the artist to stand against the State? the liberty, perhaps, of the artist to stand even against the people? I am not an enthusiast for the last of these, but I do not know in what circumstances the artist best serves humanity and himself. Possibly the conditions differ from century to century; possibly the conditions now operative in Russia are the right ones for our time. I cannot believe it; but I am pretty sure that since our conditions are not perfect, one of the better things we can do is to observe the experiment in the USSR with critical respect, not a little sympathy, and (a liberal weakness) suspended judgment.

Gilbert Seldes is the author of numerous books, among them "The Seven Lively Arts" and "Mainland," a study of the United States.

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Plants without Soil

SOILLESS GROWTH OF PLANTS. By Carleton Ellis and Miller W. Swaney. New York: Reinhold Publishing Corporation. 1938. $2.75.

Reviewed by C. C. FURNAS

FOR several years now "Water Culture," "Tray Agriculture," or "Growing Plants without Soil" has been front-page news. It is an idea which experimenters had toyed with for generations, but with no great success until W. F. Gericke of the University of California started extensive experiments nine years ago. A few years back he announced to a few gentlemen of the press that in his water culture experiments he was producing potatoes at the rate of 2400 bushels an acre and tomatoes at over two hundred tons an acre. "Bunk," sniffed many of his orthodox colleagues; but many experimenters refuse to be terrorized by orthodox disapproval, so experimentation on the soilless growth of plants has gone on all over this country, particularly during the past three years. Those who were not burdened with traditions felt that a technological revolution might be here at hand—they wanted to take part.

One of the principal results to date has been the production of a great deal of buncombe, in the public press and by salesmen with marvelous solutions to sell. An honest amateur who wanted to engage in a bit of soilless penthouse agriculture of his own knew not where to turn for authentic information. Now here, just in time for the late summer season, is an excellent summary of everything that is known on the subject, in a very readable nutshell. Plants *can* be grown without soil, make no mistake about it. They will grow rapidly and luxuriantly and in very small space. The authors (Carleton Ellis, an eminent scientist of long standing, and Miller Swaney, a rising young chemist) tell you how they did it and how you can do it. If you are not interested in growing plants, you may very well be interested in how they grow and how this potential technical revolution is progressing. And a course in chemistry, botany, or the hard knocks of gardening is not a prerequisite for the reading. The exposition is written simply, and the pictures tell half the story.

The authors do not delve into any wild predictions of the future of this business, but they do hazard some guesses on the probable commercial aspects in the near future. If their visions are correct, the greenhouse man or nurseryman who does not take up with soilless growth will soon be behind the times—perhaps out of the picture. It is easy for the reader to visualize the extension to market gardening and, if his imagination is really good, to large-scale agriculture. The authors do not commit themselves on this score, but they have gone so far as to experiment with growth for "transoceanic gardens." You visualize the first class passengers en route to Europe, strolling about the greenhouse deck and selecting the tomatoes they wish in their salad at dinner. Since the trailer of the automobile tourist always has some unoccupied space, there seems to be no reason why the family out for the summer should not grow its own vegetables as it travels.

Whether you are interested in plants or only interested in what's going on in the world, you will find this book to be one of the best investments of the year. Then when you get through reading, and if you want some more details on the necessary solutions, the authors "will gladly furnish the information." They say so. Not many authors are like that.

Hardy's Sources

THOMAS HARDY: A STUDY OF HIS WRITINGS AND THEIR BACKGROUND. By William R. Rutland. Oxford: Basil Blackwell. 1938. 21s.

Reviewed by ALEXANDER COWIE

SOURCE-HUNTING books are exasperating because they come so near the mark without hitting it. Here is a book which contains valuable data showing what Hardy read (and may have read) from childhood to old age. It tells us where he read about the idea of the Immanent Will. It provides the most complete analysis yet made of the historical sources for "The Dynasts." It throws new light upon the genesis and evolution of Hardy's first novel. For good measure it also tells about the publication and reception of his other books. For all this the author, William R. Rutland, deserves the thanks of the scholarly world.

Yet Mr. Rutland has not reached the center of his subject. It is questionable whether Hardy's "inner life" can be revealed by a study of "important influences which may have helped to mould his intellect." Intellect? The characteristic thing about Hardy was not his intellect but his emotional quality. He was greatly interested in the concepts of science and philosophy, but he wrote (to use his own term) "emotional history." What went into him as idea came out as mood or image. Here is a process we should like to understand: what internal secretions in Hardy transformed the impartial findings of science into the rebellious blood of the poet? And how could this "pessimist" Hardy yield so much pure comedy? And what was the source of Joseph Poorgrass? We need to know more about the texture, not merely the contents, of Hardy's mind.

Mr. Rutland should help us here, for his subtitle promises a critical estimate; but when he leaves fact for interpretation, he is disappointing. His critical remarks are often fumbling, sometimes inconsistent and prejudiced. He overstates Hardy's pessimism. He writes with a curious hostility toward "Tess of the D'Urbervilles" and "Jude the Obscure," and he gives no adequate reasons for his conclusion that the latter "as a work of art [is] a complete failure . . . indeed, not a work of art at all." It surely serves no critical purpose to say that D. H. Lawrence was not worthy to "lick the boots" of Hardy. The detailed criticism of "The Dynasts" furnishes new points of view but little new revelation. In general, the quality of Mr. Rutland's criticism is such as to send us back, gratefully, to his study of sources.

Romany Romance

THE SPANISH HOUSE. By Lady Eleanor Smith. New York: Doubleday, Doran & Co. 1938. $2.50.

Reviewed by WILLIAM SLOANE

FIFTEEN minutes outside Brussels lies the Forest of Soignes, stately with ancient beeches, oaks, and chestnuts. On its edge the author has situated her Spanish House, "low and sugar white" and with a roof of red tiles. And there Paris Faa, the gypsy boy who had attached himself to Richard Burke and his wife Simone, first met little Maya Darquet. The two children fall in love during the months they spend together, and the book reaches its climax in a scene in which they slip out of the house at night, meet in the forest, and marry each other according to a Romany ceremony of blood and fire.

From that point on the interest of the tale diminishes. Paris Faa, with his dark hair and skin, his flashing eyes, his skill as a boxer, and his Gypsy pride is more romantic than attractive. Neither he nor Maya, grown up and marked in different ways by the world through which they have passed, is as credible as they were when they were children. The melodramatic ending does not quite come off, just as the second half of the book as a whole fails to live up to the promise of the first. Nevertheless, the author knows how to tell a story.

INTUITION

By K. W. WILD $3.00

Women, children, animals and geniuses are all commonly credited with "intuition". The word is in everyday use, and is accepted without discussion.

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Democracy and the Mechanized State

COMMUNISM, FASCISM, OR DEMOCRACY? By Edward Heimann. New York: W. W. Norton & Company. 1938. $2.50.

Reviewed by ELI GINZBERG

WITHIN the compass of a small volume, Professor Heimann, an economist by profession and a political theorist by confession—a division of labor scarcely justified by criteria of efficiency—has essayed the difficult task of interpreting the rise and evaluating the worth of communism, fascism, and democracy. Though the analysis is labored —a host of Teutonisms has survived the author's readjustment—effort will be rewarded by insights frequently refreshing and occasionally penetrating.

Heimann introduces his subject by pointing out that power machinery, in laying the foundations for large-scale production, insured that individualistic democracy based on private property would be interred with the bones of Adam Smith and Thomas Jefferson.

To realize the promise of eighteenth century democracy under conditions of nineteenth century technology, classical socialism, the first transformation, emphasized the necessity of altering economic relations. Because of the enforced collectivization of the peasants, justified neither by morals nor machinery, communism, the second transformation, sacrificed the democratic ideal. Despite hosannas to the classless society, "the state of workers and peasants" was transformed into "the first workers' state in history." As early as 1929, Germany had reached a stalemate, for the two great labor parties refused to coöperate and each attempted to outdo the other in vilifying the impoverished middle class. In 1933, those poor in property, but rich in hate, established fascism, the third transformation: in many respects similar to communism, yet more horrible, for it alone revels in anti-humanism. *Deutschland erwache* needs neither love nor wisdom; blood and land suffice.

As the potentialities of modern technology began to unfold, the eclipse of poverty appeared on the horizon. After centuries of untold material suffering, the spectacle could not fail to awe. Small wonder that the searchers after economic security became fanatics. Despite the convulsions of recent years, their labor has not been in vain; economic security for the masses is less distant. The fanatics cheer and redouble their efforts but wise men are chastised, for they know what fools forget, that means can never justify ends since life itself is without end.

Upon the altar of economic security, many Europeans are forced to sacrifice their most valued possessions. Driven by the poison of self-hate and attracted by the luster of the magnet, fanatics call upon those still in possession of valuables to sacrifice so that they may be saved. The punishment of Esau was severe for his was a heinous crime; even animals do not live only to eat.

Eli Ginzberg, author of "The House of Adam Smith," is on the faculty of the School of Business at Columbia University.

Called by the Master

THE YOUNGEST DISCIPLE. By Edward Thompson. New York: E. P. Dutton & Co. 1938. $2.50.

Reviewed by A. W. SMITH

THE scene of this book—offered as a novel—is India of the time of Buddha; its hero is a young cowherd called by the Master. Six centuries later the methods of Christ were to show marked similarities to the methods of Buddha. In their teachings perhaps the essential difference lies in their attitudes towards life. For one it was a gift; life everlasting the prize. For the other it was pain; the reward perfect extinction.

The book revives memories, or, as Mr. Thompson would put it, "as a breath will rise up softly at evening and from the sephali flowers that have fallen will bring a memory of the sweetness that has swept to its grave on earth, so from the dead years came remembrance." Even for his style Mr. Thompson has drawn heavily on the moral and humorless anecdotes which are in the tradition of every religion. There is the miraculous conversion of the wicked robber chief. The heart of the unjust man is changed by the example of punishment borne with uncomplaining humility. Ascetics sin in the unconvincing fashion of saints. The good-hearted whore is inevitable. She is in the Bible from Rechab to Magdalene; in literature from time immemorial to "The Nutmeg Tree." The appeal of these warm-hearted ladies is sentimental, universal, and ageless.

But any novel, no matter how archaic the period, ought to show some signs of life. A stock-in-trade of Pali names and high-sounding English translations of phrases from the Buddhist canons do not help any more than the inclusion of any number of folk tales. But then,—see above for the Buddhist philosophy of life. As a study of the beginnings of a great religion the book is too slight to bear the burden.

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Title and Author	*Crime, Place, Sleuth*	*Summing Up*	*Verdict*
DEATH FROM A TOP HAT *Clayton Rawson* (Putnam: $2.)	Occultist found slain in pentagon: death deals card-trickster Black Lady. Merlini, ex-magician, helps cops fathom riddle.	Amazingly good dope on magicians and their art, keen foolery, extra tricky plot, and conclusion that lifts the roof.	Dazzling
THERE IS NO RETURN *Anita Blackmon* (Crime Club: $2.)	Millionaire, fake spirit-raiser, and others die in gloomy hotel. But big bats and gory cats don't scare Adelaide Adams.	Keeps hair standing so erect most of time that solution seems a trifle flat. Spiritist stuff is excellently handled.	Very good
NIGHT ON THE PATHWAY *Charlotte Murray Russell* (Crime Club: $2.)	Two-family hate across gloomy ravine flowers in double killing. Jane Edwards, visiting one household, drives police quietly nuts but triumphs.	Antics of nosey female sleuth and bibulous brother in nest of queer characters enliven intricate chronicle of family woes.	Diverting

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The New Books

Fiction

JULIE. By Francis Stuart. Knopf. 1938. $2.50.

The author of "Pigeon Irish" does not ring the bell with "Julie." Julie comes from South Africa to London with her big sister to undergo a skull operation at the hands of a surgeon so struck by her case that he will take nothing for the operation; and whereas her sister marries an ordinary London clerk, Julie is so hypnotized by a Jew named Ben Goldberg that, though she knows he runs an insurance agency on the scheme of successful—and quiet—arson, she sticks up for him when he is sentenced to jail for seven years, and, after an interlude with an Irish poet of nondescript character, marries him in the end, we are to suppose. We say "we are to suppose" for immediately on his release from prison, Goldberg and Julie dine at a swank restaurant where they are received with such *empressment* that the headwaiter neglects the nobility to look after them. We confess that when Goldberg went to prison, we didn't much care whether he ever came out or whether Julie and her pet turtle ever saw him—or us—again.

H. M. J.

ESCAPE TO THE ANDES. By Rupert Croft-Cooke. Messner. 1938. $2.50.

Rey Landel—idol of the English screen, darling of millions, Robert Taylor to the general—is the poor little rich boy who figures as the hero of "Escape to the Andes." Sick of the continuous posing which the adulation of multitudes requires of him, he escapes to the privacy of a remote Chilean village where he hopes he may uncover the real man beneath the well-known public sham. In the toil and hardship which are an Andean peasant's lot, in the companionship of his simple fellow creatures, he seeks salvation. But, because the simple villagers of Corenil cannot understand him they fear him, and in his presence each becomes more conscious of his sins. The exception is Sancha, a wild girl of the hills, who for a moment opens the gates of blessedness and shows him the way of salvation through love. But he cannot cope with the hostility of the villagers, and though he foils their plot to murder him, he is forced in the end to retire, disillusioned and embittered, to the great world that has robbed him of his true self.

For those who enjoy imagining themselves as idols of the screen, this book provides a pleasant escape from escape.

L. J. H. Jr.

AGE OF CONSENT. By Norman Lindsay. Farrar & Rinehart. 1938. $2.50.

The most extraordinary thing about this comic Australian novel is its flavor of remoteness. The reader is constantly aware of an alien atmosphere in which familiar events are transpiring. Mr. Lindsay has achieved notable success in transmitting the impression of a distant and unfamiliar scene. The extraordinary part is that he succeeded in doing so by using common English words to describe familiar characters and situations. Bradly Mudgett is a fairly typical example of the solitary, self-contained artist. Podson is equally recognizable as a weak, embezzling bank clerk. Cora has also appeared recurringly in fiction as the half-wild creature of the woods, while Edmund, the dog, is pictured as a devoted companion who fits into the traditional frame of "man's best friend."

The style is uncommon, inclined at times to be overwritten, frequently tinged with irony, and even more frequently tending to be obscure. Oddly enough it does not interfere seriously with the flow of the story, which describes the growing affection between the middle-aged painter and his forest-bred model. However, you are scarcely prepared to accept the murder which occurs toward the close of the book. This bizarre catastrophe, although properly motivated, seems out of character with the comic feeling of the narrative.

R. S.

History

IN FRENCH CREEK VALLEY. By John Earle Reynolds. Meadville, Pa.: Crawford County Historical Society. 1938. $3.50.

On December 14, 1776, the crossing of the Delaware was a gleam in Washington's mind. The General was at Keith's Tavern, a few miles north of Philadelphia; and he sorely wanted information concerning the enemy, which General James Ewing at Trenton Falls might send him. But there was no paper to be had, save for the blank pages of a day book belonging to an absent guest. Washington commandeered them, dictated, and signed. Hereafter the episode savors of greasepaint: a faithful old Negro who was to tear out the pages and deliver them, a platoon of British soldiers raiding and burning the tavern on the very next day, the accidental salvaging of the day book as the fleeing landlady bundled up her prize tablecloth, and in 1937 its recovery from a haircloth trunk musty in a Meadville barn. This provenance may be doubtful, but here is the interesting three-page letter, reproduced in photostat. It is bafflingly irrelevant to the other contents of this book, which is the history of a little segment of northwestern Pennsylvania.

The segment, however, is of unusual interest. French Creek, the little stream which gave French soldiers and traders, after portage from Lake Erie, access to the Allegheny and thence the Ohio Valley, was first a strategic military frontier. In 1788 a party of home-builders began their spring plowing in the stubble of deserted Indian fields between French Creek and the Cussewago. "Mead's Settlement" became Meadville, a cultural oasis in a sparsely settled region. Meadville itself had but 300 citizens in 1810, about 1,100 twenty years later, and by 1860 only 3,700. Yet its folk could boast a "Meadville Society for the Encouragement of Domestic Manufactures" in 1807, a public library in 1813, and shortly a Sabbath School Union, a Female Cent Society, a Thespian Society (1828), not to mention a Singing School that startled nearby wild fauna as early as 1805. The county newspaper, the *Crawford Weekly Messenger*, had an unbroken run from 1805 to 1831, save for a few weeks when the editor was helping Perry lick the British on Lake Erie. Timothy Alden had hearty aid from his fellow-citizens in the founding of Allegheny College in 1815. Meadville's pioneers were ceaselessly concerned with improvements in transportation, and got enough money from British investors to build a railroad. They deserved a much better book than the present one, which is a "repository" of badly mortised clippings and scraps of family history.

E. D. B.

International

SOVIET TEMPO. By Violet Conolly. Sheed & Ward. 1938. $2.50.

This brief, unpretentious, and vividly written record of a recent journey through the Soviet Union is one of the most informative and most readable books of this type that has come to our attention. An economist with a real literary gift, civilized and intelligent, Miss Conolly has packed volumes of reality into her matter-of-fact description of Russians and their life. Her travels took her through Moscow, Gorki (Nizhni-Novgorod), Baku, and other urban centers as well as the resort areas of the Caucasus. Neither a distressed radical nor a wishful-thinking enthusiast, she viewed the scene through unblurred eyes and an unblurred mind. If the picture, as a whole, will scarcely recommend the new Russia to Western readers, the fault is surely not hers.

Miss Conolly had written two books on phases of Soviet economy, had visited the country in 1928 and in 1934, and is at home in the Russian language. She decided to check up on her memories and on possible changes, with closer attention to everyday life than to statistics . . . "for the Webbs have shown what monumental phantasies can be reared on Soviet documents divorced from the Russian scene." Those who want an intimate general view of Russia in 1937—elementary

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without being superficial—have reason to be grateful for her decision. Reading the book, I was constantly impressed by Miss Conolly's perspicacity. In a casual conversation with a fellow-passenger or a glimpse of some factory or sanatorium she often finds the clues to fundamental Soviet truths that others miss or require years to discover.

She bends backward to be fair in her judgments of the Soviet system. Aware, as she proceeds through Russia, that her impressions are increasingly somber, she loses no opportunity to mention the "brighter side"—literacy, "liberation" of women, child care, etc. Indeed, having written the last page and seen it in type, her conscience drove her to add a postscript underscoring those mitigating aspects of the Soviet reality. All the same, what touched her most deeply, and what therefore remains most strongly with the reader, was the pervasive physical misery and mental uniformity. Above all she seems to have been offended by the cocksure boastfulness based on ignorance, at one pole, and shabby hypocrisy at the other.

E. L.

Miscellaneous

THE LORD HELPS THOSE . . .: How the People of Nova Scotia Are Solving Their Problems Through Co-operation. By Bertram B. Fowler. Vanguard. 1938. $1.75.

In these days of multiplying violence and tyranny, with every newspaper bringing accounts of bombs falling on Canton and of tomatoes flying in New Jersey, it is gratifying to encounter one book which pictures the forces of evil in full retreat. Here is the inspiring story of Nova Scotia, where the coöperative movement is rescuing fishermen and miners from unmitigated poverty and despair. Mr. Fowler, author of "Consumer Co-operation in America," offers an appreciative survey of the work of Dr. J. J. Thompkins and his colleagues at St. Francis Xavier University, the socially conscious scholars who within ten years have mobilized a stricken community into action. Attempting no critical analysis of this movement nor estimate of its possible limitations, Mr. Fowler writes with unqualified enthusiasm of the economic betterment which coöperation has provided in the seacoast villages of Nova Scotia. His exciting account of economic salvation through democratic self-help deserves the attention of both those who are already advocates of consumer cooperation and those who remain skeptical, from either conservative or radical convictions.

From this study of coöperation in Nova Scotia emerge several principles of importance to any consideration of economic recovery in the United States. Mr. Fowler insists that even the most desolate community can evolve a solution for its distress, if it can apply intelligent direction to regional needs. These impoverished fishermen, in as parlous a condition as any group on the North American continent, have triumphed over declining markets, profiteering middlemen, and local ignorance and demoralization. Their coöperative movement converts every aspect of the village economy: the catching, processing, and distributing of the fish; bank credit and purchase of equipment; handicraft work for the women, and new houses and schools for the community. This whole development was made possible solely by the educational activities of the St. Francis Xavier scholars, who taught the unlettered fishermen to read and think and trained local leaders for the various projects. Accessible libraries, effective adult education, and constant group discussion, Mr. Fowler correctly insists, must underlie any successful effort in consumer coöperation. Whether the coöperative enterprises already existent in the United States can be expanded into a movement of decisive political force remains to be seen, but many of the elements of the problem will be found in this book. The Nova Scotia laboratory confirms a general principle worth reiterating in contemporary America—that the price of political and economic self-government is continuous education and free discussion.

J. F. G.

VINDICIÆ TYPOGRAPHICÆ. By Johann Daniel Schoepflin. Translated by Charles A. Nelson. New York: Privately Printed. 1938.

At the present time the controversy over the relative claims of Gutenberg and Coster to the discovery of printing in Europe is but the echo of old battles. Even the Encyclopædia Britannica has ceased to fight for the Haarlem legend. But in 1760 the proponents of the rival claims were battling furiously, advancing theories first, then seeking facts to support them. In that year a learned Strassburg scholar, Johann Daniel Schoepflin, published in Latin a vigorous assertion of the priority of Gutenberg, and of the claim of Strassburg to being the cradle of European printing. He printed transcripts of certain documents of great importance in the scantily-documented life of Gutenberg, taken from the archives of Strassburg. In the ensuing years his position was assailed, and the authenticity of the documents questioned; unfortunately, in the revolutionary frenzy of 1793 and the military madness of 1870, these documents were destroyed—not, however, before careful copies had been made. Later consideration has brought a considerable measure of vindication to Schoepflin. The late Charles A. Nelson, sometime reference librarian of Columbia University, translated for his own satisfaction the Latin treatise of 1760, which included these important documents. It is now issued in a very limited edition, seen through the press by H. M. Lydenberg of the New York Public Library, and for the first time students of the Gutenberg controversy who do not read Latin have Schoepflin's work opened to them. The seven plates of the original are reproduced, and Mr. Lydenberg has contributed some additional material.

C. P. R.

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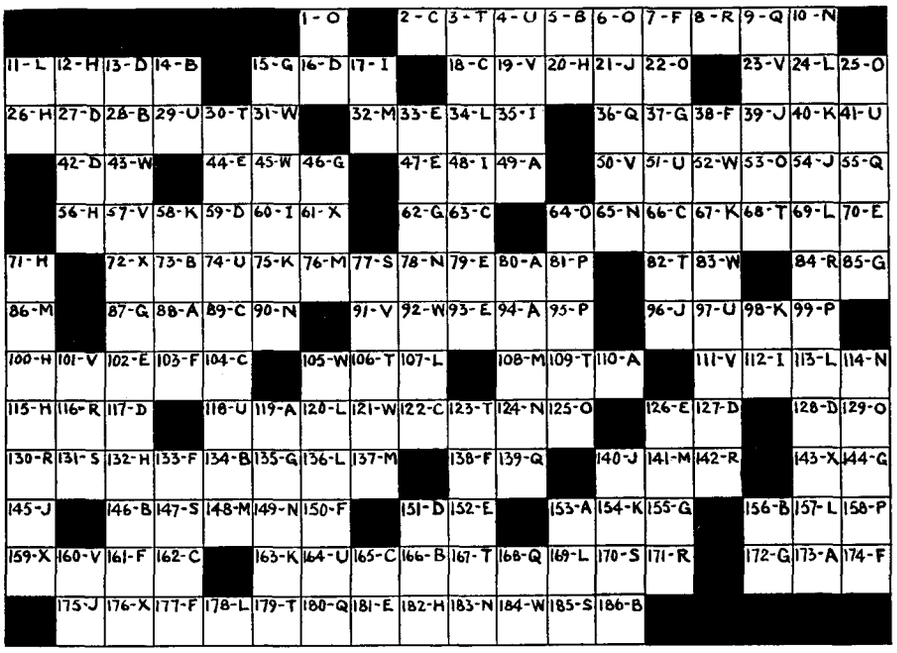
Double-Crostics: No. 225

By ELIZABETH S. KINGSLEY



DIRECTIONS

To solve this puzzle, you must guess twenty-four words, the definitions of which are given in the column headed DEFINITIONS. The letters in each word to be guessed are numbered. These numbers appear under the dashes in the column headed WORDS. There is a dash for each letter in the required word. The key letters in the squares are for convenience, indicating to which word in the definitions each letter in the diagram belongs. When you have guessed a word, fill it in on the dashes; then write each letter in the correspondingly numbered square on the puzzle diagram. When the squares are all filled in you will find (by reading from left to right) a quotation from a famous author. Reading up and down the letters mean nothing. The black squares indicate ends of words; therefore words do not necessarily end at the right side of the diagram.

When the column headed WORDS is filled in, the initial letters spell the name of the author and the title of the piece from which the quotation has been taken. Authority for spelling and definitions is Webster's New International Dictionary (second edition).

The solution of last week's *Double-Crostic* will be found on page 24 of this issue.

DEFINITIONS

A. Greedy.

B. Faulty.

C. Ichabod Crane's horse.

D. Science of wealth.

E. Hot spicy alcoholic drink.

F. Athenian statesman (B.C.?-468?).

G. Circumferentor.

H. Contrarily.

I. Poem of lamentation.

J. Turned round rapidly.

K. Character in "Hamlet."

L. Seized as forfeited.

M. English poet (1593-1633).

N. Conceded.

O. Relieved, repaired.

P. Gaze askance.

Q. Eats into or away.

R. Lithe.

S. In collision.

T. Author of "Thus Spake Zarathustra."

U. Threatened to collapse.

V. As yet.

W. Composer of comic operas (1819-1880).

X. With greatness of soul.

WORDS

49 94 88 80 119 110 173 153

166 134 146 28 5 14 73 156 186

66 122 165 2 63 18 104 162 89

13 128 16 127 42 59 151 27 117

93 33 102 152 79 181 44 126 47 70

177 133 38 161 138 7 174 103 150

37 144 172 135 87 85 46 15 62 155

20 100 12 71 26 56 115 182 132

17 60 112 48 35

140 96 175 39 21 54 145

58 163 154 75 98 40 67

178 169 24 120 69 34 136 113 11 157 107

141 86 76 32 137 148 108

65 10 149 183 90 78 124 114

129 6 64 22 53 1 25 125

99 95 81 158

9 168 139 55 180 36

171 8 142 116 84 130

77 131 147 170 185

106 30 3 82 68 123 179 109 167

29 164 41 74 97 4 51 118

19 101 91 57 23 111 50 160

83 43 121 92 52 184 105 31 45

176 143 159 72 61

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Trade Winds

BY P. E. G. QUERCUS

Souvenir of Mark Twain

THE chance of having to meet an incoming visitor on a steamship pier, and lend a hand in some Customs formalities, gave us the pleasure of meeting Mr. Alexander McKeon, deputy surveyor of the Port of New York. Mr. McKeon showed us an interesting document. Years ago, as a young inspector on duty at the piers, he was handed a note, addressed thus:—

To Any Inspector of Customs
On the Hamburg-American dock, Hoboken,
with respectful greetings.

The young official opened the envelope and read:—

"Stormfield", June 25th 1909

Dear Sir:

I suddenly learn that the Kaiserin Augusta Victoria is due to-morrow, whereas I was not expecting her so soon. Miss Mary Clark is on board, and is bringing a dog for my daughter, Miss Jean Clemens.

I have not time to inquire what measures I ought to take, in order to get admission to the dock for the bearer of this note (my man-servant, George O'Connor). Therefore I beg you to grant him admission, so that he can relieve Miss Clarke of her burden and carry out the Customs formalities and requirements in her place.

If I am asking more than is usual, you may report me to my friend, the Collector of the Port and I will make the due amends.

Very respectfully,
S. L. CLEMENS
(MARK TWAIN)

☞We print this (never published before) by the courtesy of Harper and Brothers, and with the express notation that it is *Copyright, 1938, by the Mark Twain Company.* ☞It has a special pathos in that the date was only a few months before the death of Jean Clemens.

☞Even a publisher, when he turns author, cannot altogether please himself. Joseph W. Lippincott wanted to call his forthcoming book of nature studies *My Wild Neighbors,* but his own firm would not allow it. They feared it would sound like a sociology of the Philadelphia suburbs, so the book will appear as *Animal Neighbors of the Countryside.* ☞One of the Q. Associates, a baseball fan, has come to Old Q. in great excitement with a snapshot of Joe Cronin (of the Boston Red Sox) reading *The Citadel.* They say that Mr. Cronin became very enthusiastic over the novel by his namesake, Dr. A. J. Cronin, and was even found busily reading it between the two games of a double-header in Detroit. ☞Anne Ford of Little Brown, who spends many Saturday afternoons at Fenway Park, home of the Red Sox, assures us that this is no publicity gag. ☞We should be glad to print, if available, a photograph of Dr. A. J. Cronin watching a ball game.

☞Books are taking to the road more and more. Virginia Mussey (formerly of

Cronin & Cronin

Loring and Mussey) is selling the Middle-West for Stackpole by automobile—"top down, tanks full and tires wearing thin on the old Stackpole Pontiac, 1933 model," says Bill Soskin. ☞And Sam Lincoln is driving the Stephen Daye bookwagon along the coast of Maine. Frank Frazier of Lippincott's thinks that the books-by-road movement is general, for his house has come through with a new printing of a book which is 21 years old this summer, *Parnassus on Wheels.* ☞Greenfield & Smith have opened an interesting shop, mostly for out-of-print and secondhand, at 132 East 39, open evenings until 10 p. m. Their particular specialty is books on Labor problems and revolutionary movements; they think their part of 39th Street is lucky because the Shakespeare Fellowship is in the same block. ☞The first book they *didn't* sell was *The Intimate Papers of Colonel House,* which a questing customer looked at, thinking it a book about wallpapers. ☞The Labor Poets of America have formed a committee to urge the government of N. Y. City to name a park or square for Walt Whitman. ☞And the 16th title in the notable Random House-Nonesuch Press series of One-Volume editions is a compact 1100 pages of Walt, edited by Emory Holloway. This admirable volume ($3.50) contains not only the poems complete but a large assortment of the prose and letters without which any judgment of Whitman is dubious. ☞One of Old Q's favorites among Walt's letters is the very shortest, written to Tom Harned when Walt was 70. He says simply: "If you will, fill the brown bottle with sherry for me, and the small white bottle with cognac. My dear friend O'Connor is dead."

☞In their sixth novel competition the *Atlantic Monthly* judges found no MS submitted which they considered worthy of the prize award. One of the competitors, hearing that 918 MSS were submitted, calculates that the total weight of these unavailing efforts was 1⅓ tons, the total number of typed pages over a million, and the postage spent to Boston and back was about $1200. ☞Yale University Press tells us that *The Folklore of Capitalism* has now appeared in a Swedish translation. ☞Speaking of folklore, at The Fantods we have fallen back on our favorite and antique amusement, croquet. The battered set of implements had to be replaced by a new outfit from the local hardware store. In the little pamphlet of rules accompanying the game, morbid Old Q. discovered a paragraph that sounds like propaganda? It says: "In our happy country anything that is practical and amusing is easily adopted by rich and poor, and thanks to our exquisite machinery, we can serve all in taste and cheapness."

☞The Book Clinic Honor for June has been awarded to *The Burly Fields* by Robert Nathan, an omnibus volume containing five of his earlier works. W. A. Dwiggins designed the volume. ☞Little, Brown send word of an interview given by Crown Prince Gustav Adolf of Sweden to the *Philadelphia Bulletin,* in which he said: "I have been reading a very good book . . . It is called *The Epic of America* and was written by James Truslow Adams."

☞Meditating our biennial visit to the oculist we come upon A. P. Herbert's pleasant piece on Eye Trouble, in his new collection of skits, *Sip! Swallow!* Mr. Herbert has devised some new test cards for eye-patients, certainly more amusing than those now used. Here is one of his suggestions:—

Y
OUMAYS
AYWHATYOULIK
EABOUTTHEPLEASUR
ESOFARTANDTHEJOYOFPU
BLICSERVICEBUTAFTERALLISTH
EREANYTHINGLIKEANICEFRIEDS
OLEANDAJOLLYGOODBOTTLEOFWINEWITH
ABLOND
E

☞But Mr. Herbert's best invention is the Silver Secretary, an automatic evasion for answering phone calls and rebuking bores. This is admirable but too long to quote: we refer you to *Sip! Swallow!* ($2.)

SOLUTION OF LAST WEEK'S DOUBLE-CROSTIC (No. 224)

W. S. BLUNT: "LOVE LYRICS OF PROTEUS."

Lilac and gold and green!
Those are the colors I love the best;
Spring's own raiment untouched and clean,
When the world is awake and yet hardly dressed,
And the stranger sun. . . .
. . . . wonders why
She is so beautiful, he so blest.

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